



Manga

BUBBLEGUM
CRISIS
4 OF 4

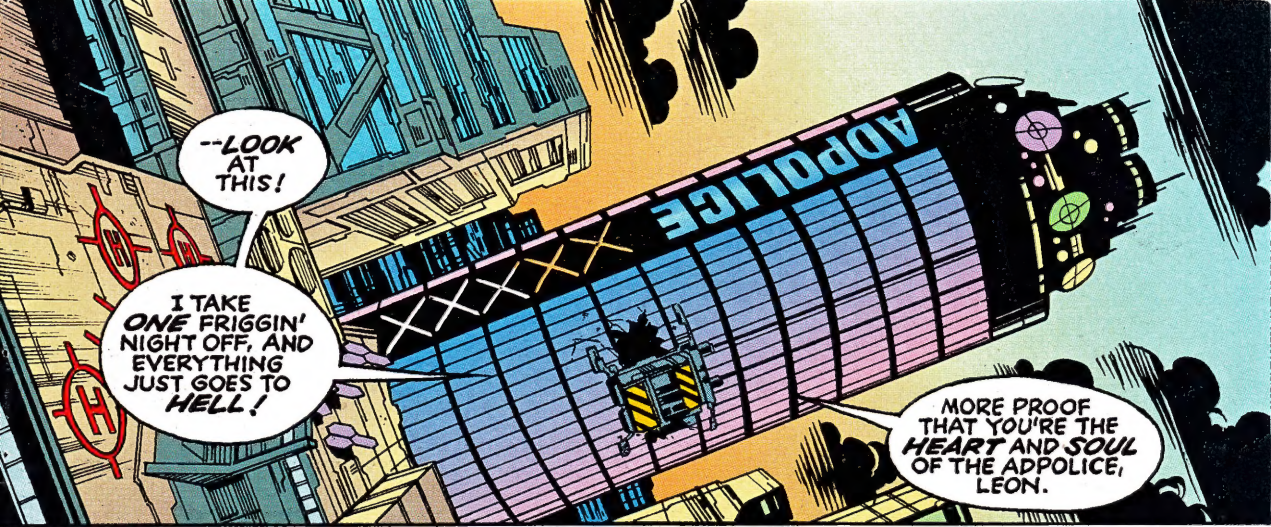
\$2.50 US
\$3.40 CAN

BUBBLEGUM CRISIS

GRAND
MAL



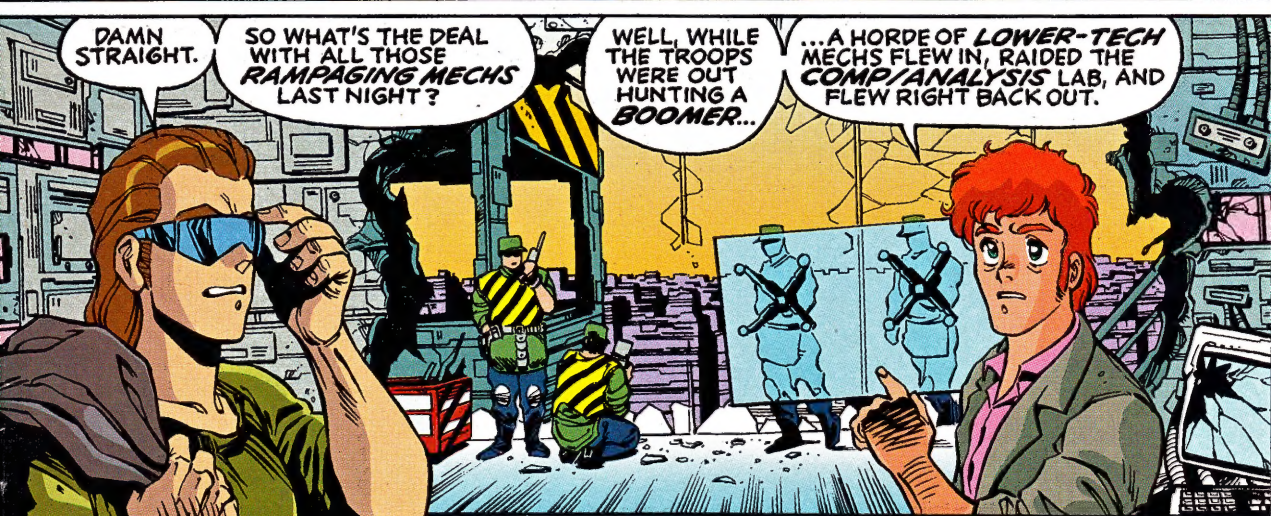
STUDIO
PROTEUS



--LOOK
AT
THIS!

I TAKE
ONE FRIGGIN'
NIGHT OFF, AND
EVERYTHING
JUST GOES TO
HELL!

MORE PROOF
THAT YOU'RE THE
HEART AND SOUL
OF THE ADPOLICE,
LEON.

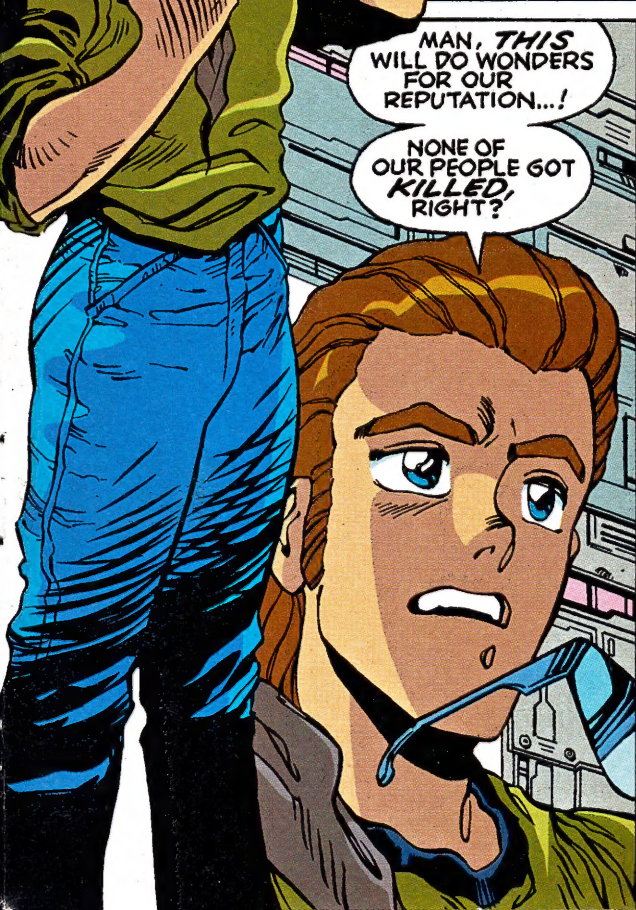


DAMN
STRAIGHT.

SO WHAT'S THE DEAL
WITH ALL THOSE
RAMPAGING MECHS
LAST NIGHT?

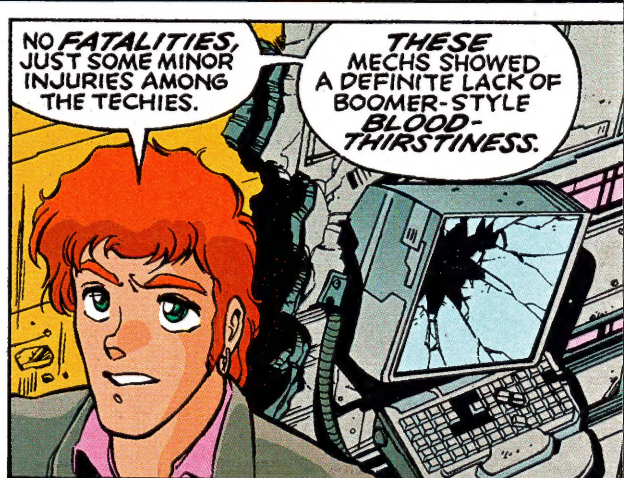
WELL, WHILE
THE TROOPS
WERE OUT
HUNTING A
BOOMER...

...A HORDE OF **LOWER-TECH**
MECHS FLEW IN, RAIDED THE
COMP/ANALYSIS LAB, AND
FLEW RIGHT BACK OUT.



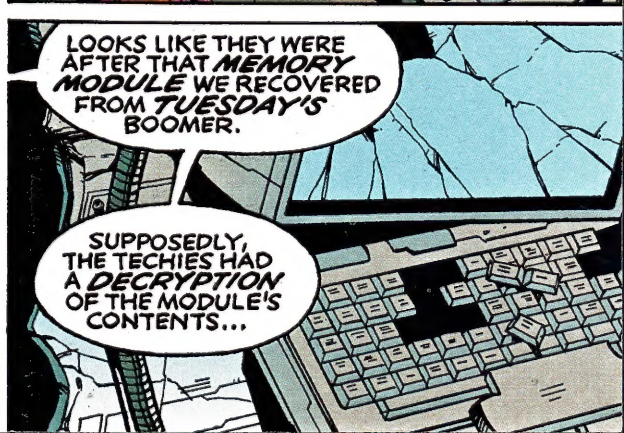
MAN, **THIS**
WILL DO WONDERS
FOR OUR
REPUTATION...!

NONE OF
OUR PEOPLE GOT
KILLED,
RIGHT?



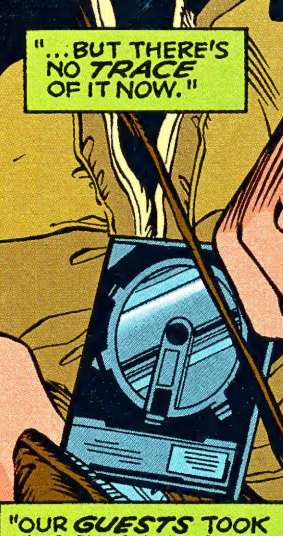
NO **FATALITIES**,
JUST SOME MINOR
INJURIES AMONG
THE TECHIES.

THESE
MECHS SHOWED
A DEFINITE LACK OF
BOOMER-STYLE
**BLOOD-
THIRSTINESS**.



LOOKS LIKE THEY WERE
AFTER THAT **MEMORY**
MODULE WE RECOVERED
FROM **TUESDAY'S**
BOOMER.

SUPPOSEDLY,
THE TECHIES HAD
A **DECRYPTION**
OF THE MODULE'S
CONTENTS...

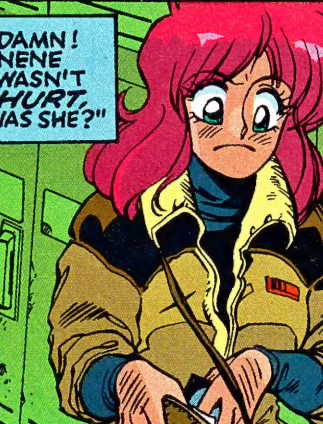


"...BUT THERE'S NO *TRACE* OF IT NOW."

"OUR *GUESTS* TOOK THE TIME TO WIPE IT FROM OUR COMPUTERS, APPARENTLY."

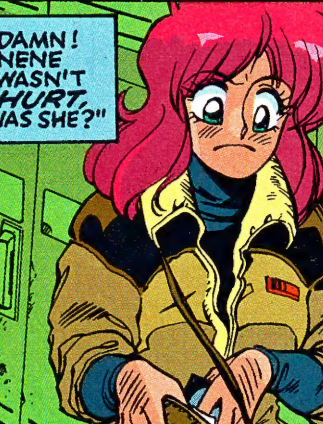
"IN FACT, YOUR GIRLFRIEND **NENE** SPOTTED A MECH MESSING AROUND AT A TERMINAL..."

"DAMN! NENE WASN'T **HURT**, WAS SHE?"



"IN FACT, YOUR GIRLFRIEND **NENE** SPOTTED A MECH MESSING AROUND AT A TERMINAL..."

"DAMN! NENE WASN'T **HURT**, WAS SHE?"



"NO, THE ONLY WOUND SHE SUFFERED WAS TO HER *ADPOLICE PRIDE*, LIKE THE REST OF US."

"GOOD. HATE TO THINK OF A *PIECE* LIKE HER GETTING MESSED UP...!"



"NO, THE ONLY WOUND SHE SUFFERED WAS TO HER *ADPOLICE PRIDE*, LIKE THE REST OF US."

"GOOD. HATE TO THINK OF A *PIECE* LIKE HER GETTING MESSED UP...!"

WELL, SPEAKING OF PIECES, LEON...

... DID ANY THAT A KA DROPPED WITH T...

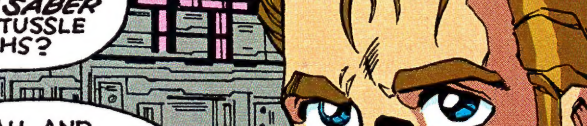
WHUP WHUP WHUP



ANYONE TELL YOU
NIGHT SABER
BY TO TUSSE
HE MECHS?

YEAH, AND
GOT HERSELF
MINIGUNNED
TO
PIECES, I HEARD.

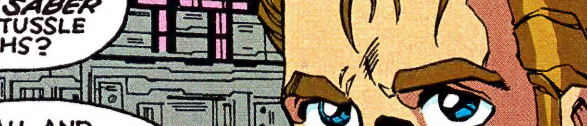
THAT'S ONE
LESS VIGILANTE
BABE IN HIGH-
HEELED ARMOR, HUH?



ANYONE TELL YOU
NIGHT SABER
BY TO TUSSE
THE MECHS?

YEAH, AND
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THAT'S ONE
LESS VIGILANTE
BABE IN HIGH-
HEELED ARMOR, HUH?

HARD TO SAY. WORD IS, SOME KIND OF **CANDY APPLE RED** MECH FLEW OFF WITH THE BODY...

ALSO EVADING OUR POOR HELO JOCKEYS, OF COURSE.

WHUP WHUP WHUP

ICE

HARD TO SAY. WORD IS, SOME KIND OF **CANDY APPLE RED** MECH FLEW OFF WITH THE BODY...

ALSO EVADING OUR POOR HELO JOCKEYS, OF COURSE.

WHUP WHUP WHUP

ICE

MAN, THIS HAS BEEN ONE WRETCHED WEEK FOR THE ADPOLICE...

...HELL, IT'S BEEN A WRETCHED WEEK FOR PRETTY MUCH EVERYBODY...

THEY'RE BADLY OVEREXTENDED, QUINCY.

JUST UP YOUR OFFER BY, SAY, FIVE YUAN A SHARE PLUS SOME MUNICIPAL BONDS...

...AND YOU'LL OUTBID THEM SAFELY AND WITHOUT EXCESS, OKAY?

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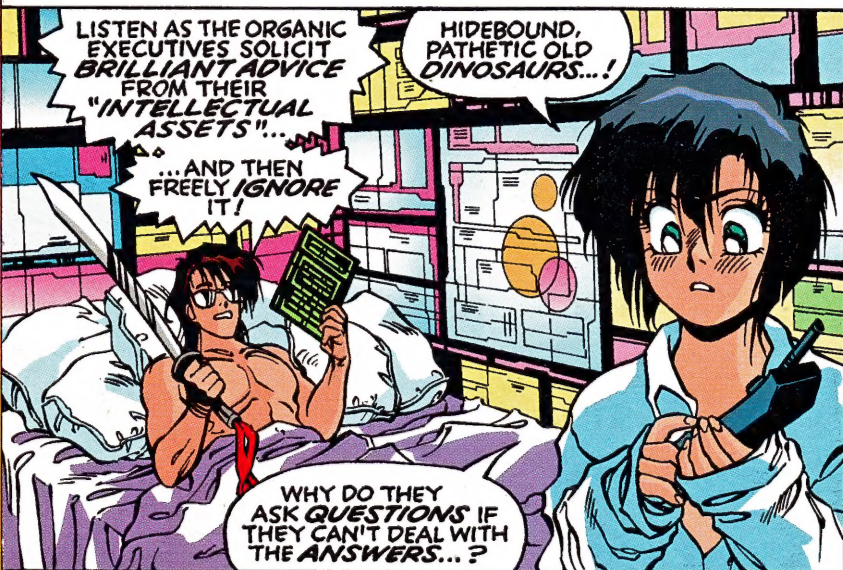


WITNESS
THE PROCESS
OF **DECISION
MAKING**
AT MIGHTY
GENOM!

FINE,
QUINCY.
YOU'RE THE
EXECUTIVE BOARD
CHAIRMAN,
I'M JUST THE
**STRATEGIC
ADVISOR.**

YOU CAN
LISTEN TO
MY "LEARNED
COUNSEL," OR
JUST
DISREGARD
IT.

THE
DECISION'S
YOURS.



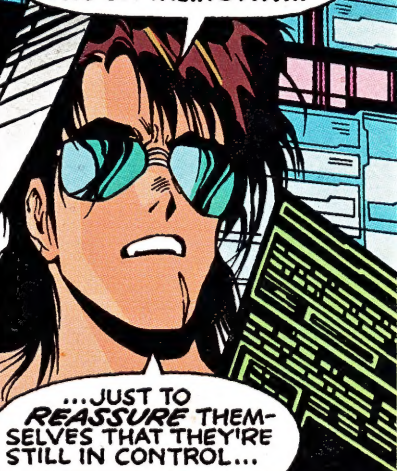
LISTEN AS THE ORGANIC
EXECUTIVES SOLICIT
BRILLIANT ADVICE
FROM THEIR
"INTELLECTUAL
ASSETS"...

...AND THEN
FREELY IGNORE
IT!

HIDEBOUND,
PATHETIC OLD
DINOSAURS...!

WHY DO THEY
ASK **QUESTIONS** IF
THEY CAN'T DEAL WITH
THE **ANSWERS...?**

OH, IT'S JUST A **HUMAN**
THING. THEY HAVE TO MAKE
A **TOKEN DECISION** OR
TWO ON THEIR OWN...



...JUST TO
REASSURE THEM-
SELVES THAT THEY'RE
STILL IN **CONTROL...**



CONSIDERING THAT
THEY DECIDE WHETHER
WE **LIVE OR DIE**, I'D
SAY THE ORGANICS ARE
DEFINITELY STILL
IN **CONTROL...!**

HEY!

WHAT
ABOUT THE
THREAT
FROM **OUT-
SIDE?**



AS IN **VASHNEVSKAYA**
AND HIS ADORABLE LITTLE
MECH? GET **SERIOUS...**

HEY,
THEY'VE
RETRIEVED
THAT **PESKY**
MODULE...

...NO
DOUBT THEY'VE
PREPPED TONS
OF **NASTY**
HARDWARE...



...AND ARE ON
THE VERGE OF A
**PAROXYSM OF
APOCALYPTIC
MAYHEM!**

EITHER
THAT, OR
THEY'RE SITTING
AROUND DOING
NOTHING.

CAN'T...
STAND IT...
ANY LONGER...

...COME ON,
YOU
BASTARD...

...THE END
IS NEAR.

AT LAST.

...KILL
ME...

...KILL ME
NOW...

THREE YEARS AGO, GENOM MESSILY
INTERRUPTED MY ILL-FATED
HEADHUNTING MISSION, FIRST BY
DEPLOYING COMBAT BOOMERS...

...THEN BY NAILING MY TEAM WITH
TRANSMISSIONS FROM A "PULSE
WEAPON," AN ANTIPERSONNEL
DEVICE THAT USES ELECTRO-
MAGNETIC FIELDS TO DISRUPT
HUMAN NEURAL ACTIVITY.

CONSPIRACY THEORISTS SAY THIS LITTLE TOY DATES
BACK TO THE OLD SOVIET UNION. THAT'S SOMEWHAT
IRONIC, GIVEN MY RUSSIAN ETHNIC HYPHEN...

I WAS THE ONLY ONE TO
ESCAPE THE TOKYO AM-
BUSH UNSCATHED...

...OR SO I
THOUGHT.

...SPRAY
SOME
GRAY...

EIGHT MONTHS
AGO, I LEARNED
OTHERWISE.

TURNED OUT THAT
MY TEMPORAL LOBE
WAS RIDDLED WITH
THOUSANDS OF
MICROLESIONS.

SOME KEY WORDS
USED IN HIS
DIAGNOSIS WERE
MALIGNANT,
INOPERABLE,
PROGRESSIVE,
AND FATAL.

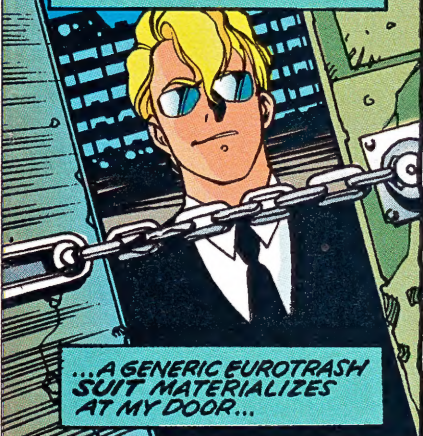
...OR, IN THE
"JARGON,"
"COMPLEX
PARTIAL
TEMPORAL
LOBE
SEIZURES..."

DAMNEDEST
THING MY
NEUROLOGIST
HAD EVER SEEN.

I WOULD SOON
EXPERIENCE BLACK-
OUTS, SEIZURES,
UNCONTROLLABLE
ATTACKS OF RAGE...

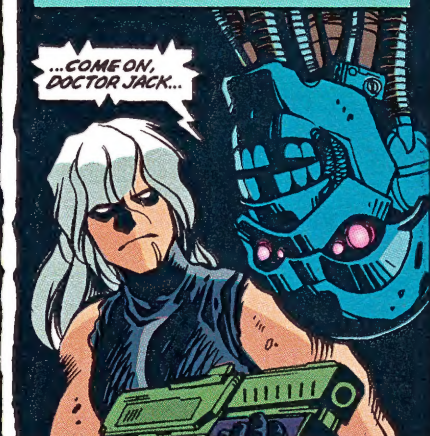
"...ACCOMPANIED
BY EPISODIC
DYSCONTROL."
NICE PHRASE,
THAT.

CUT TO: TWO WEEKS AGO
TONIGHT, JUST AFTER
MY EVENING DOSE OF
ACETAZOLIMIDE AND
CARBAMAZEPINE...

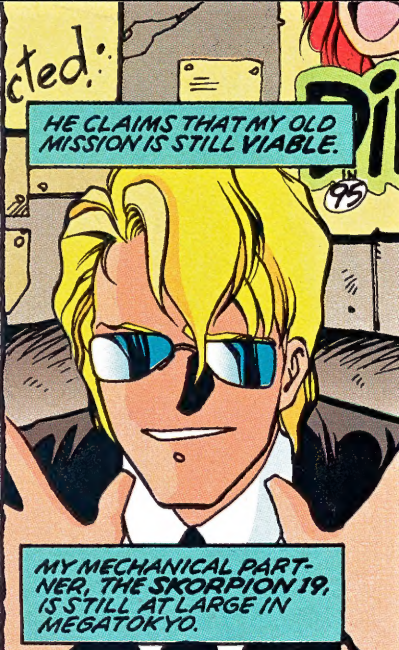


...A GENERIC EUROTRASH
SUIT MATERIALIZES
AT MY DOOR...

...LIKE A PARTICULARLY
NASTY PHARMACEUTICAL
SIDE EFFECT. THE SUIT SAYS
HE HAILS FROM MY FORMER
EUROPEAN EMPLOYERS...



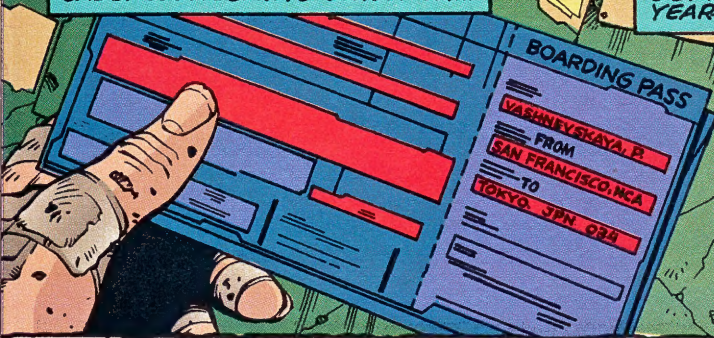
...COME ON,
DOCTOR JACK...



HE CLAIMS THAT MY OLD
MISSION IS STILL VIABLE.

MY MECHANICAL PART-
NER, THE SKORPION 19,
IS STILL AT LARGE IN
MEGATOKYO.

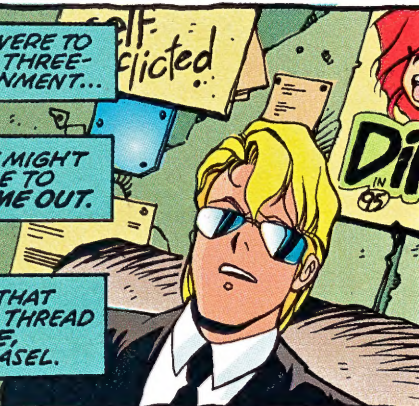
HIS SUPERIORS ARE AWARE OF MY
SADLY WORSENING CONDITION...



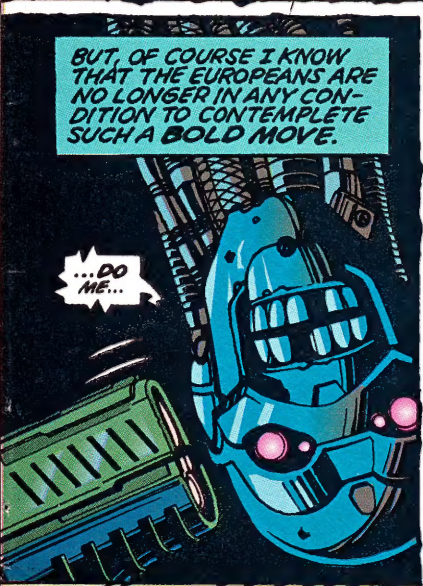
...PERHAPS, IF I WERE TO
COMPLETE MY THREE-
YEAR-OLD ASSIGNMENT...

...THEY MIGHT
BE ABLE TO
HELP ME OUT.

DANGLE THAT
SLENDER THREAD
OF HOPE,
EUROWEASEL.



BUT, OF COURSE I KNOW
THAT THE EUROPEANS ARE
NO LONGER IN ANY CON-
DITION TO CONTEMPLATE
SUCH A BOLD MOVE.



...DO
ME...

NO, THIS SUIT IS REALLY
FROM GENOM. AND
GENOM, IT WOULD
SEEM, DOESN'T LIKE
LOOSE ENDS...



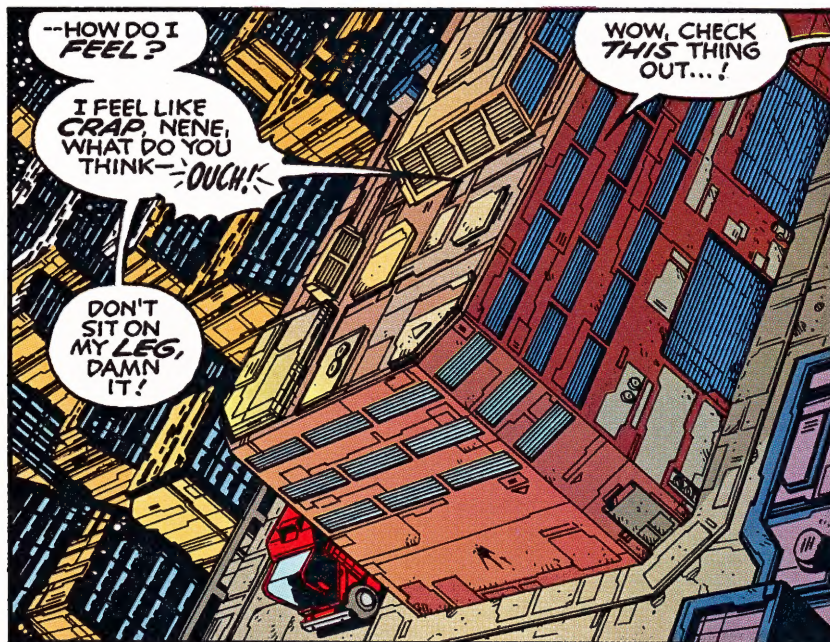
...SUCH AS HAVING ELE-
MENTS OF A CORPORATE
EXTRACTION TEAM
STALKING ABOUT ON
ITS HOME TURF.



**BUH
KOOM**

NO, GENOM
WOULD PREFER
A NICE, SOLID
RESOLUTION
TO THE MATTER...





--HOW DO I
FEEL?

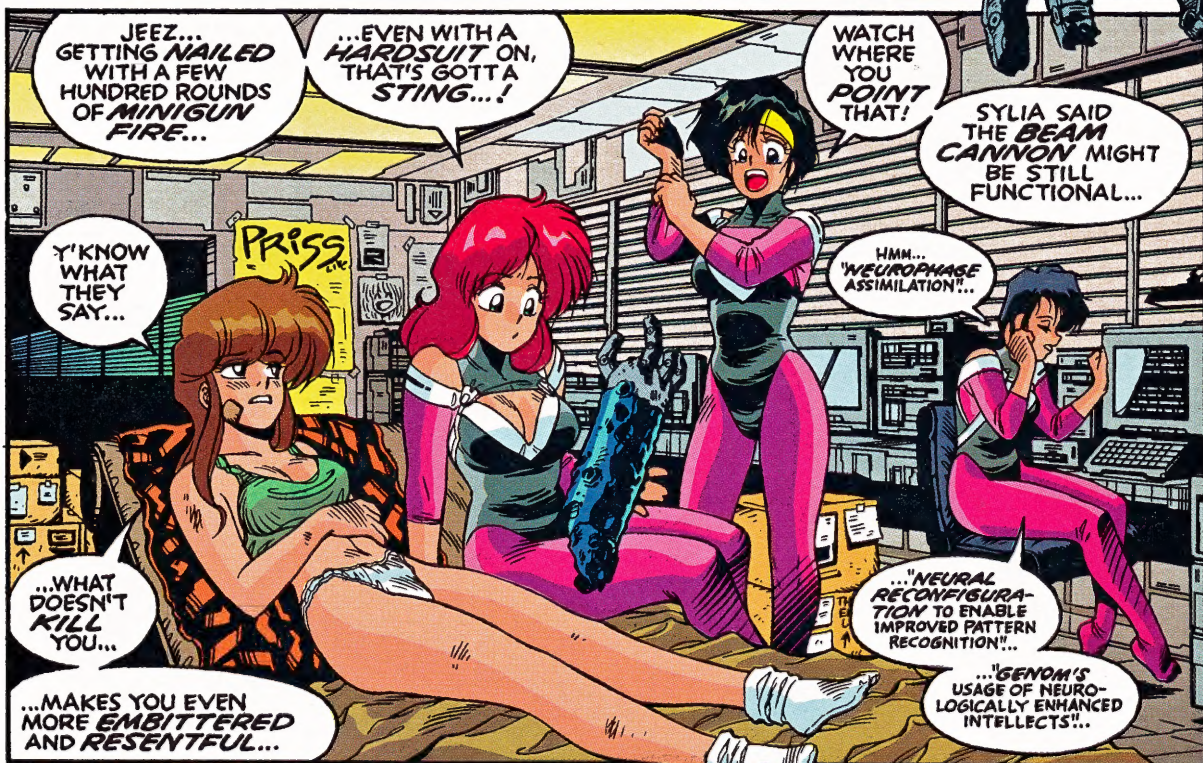
I FEEL LIKE
CRAP, NENE,
WHAT DO YOU
THINK--*OUCH!*

DON'T
SIT ON
MY LEG,
DAMN
IT!

WOW, CHECK
THIS THING
OUT...!



KEEPING A SOUVENIR
OF YOUR *GALLING*
DEFEAT, HUH,
PRISS?



JEEZ...
GETTING *NAILED*
WITH A FEW
HUNDRED ROUNDS
OF *MINIGUN*
FIRE...

...EVEN WITH A
HARDSUIT ON,
THAT'S GOTTA
STING...!

WATCH
WHERE
YOU
POINT
THAT!

SYLIA SAID
THE *BEAM*
CANNON MIGHT
BE STILL
FUNCTIONAL...

Y'KNOW
WHAT
THEY
SAY...

HMM...
'NEUROPHASE
ASSIMILATION'...

...WHAT
DIDN'T
KILL
YOU...

...MAKES YOU EVEN
MORE *EMBITTERED*
AND *RESENTFUL*...

...*'NEURAL*
RECONFIGURA-
TION TO ENABLE
IMPROVED PATTERN
RECOGNITION'...

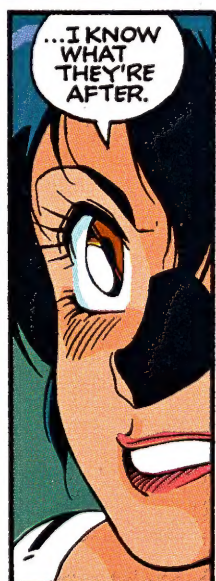
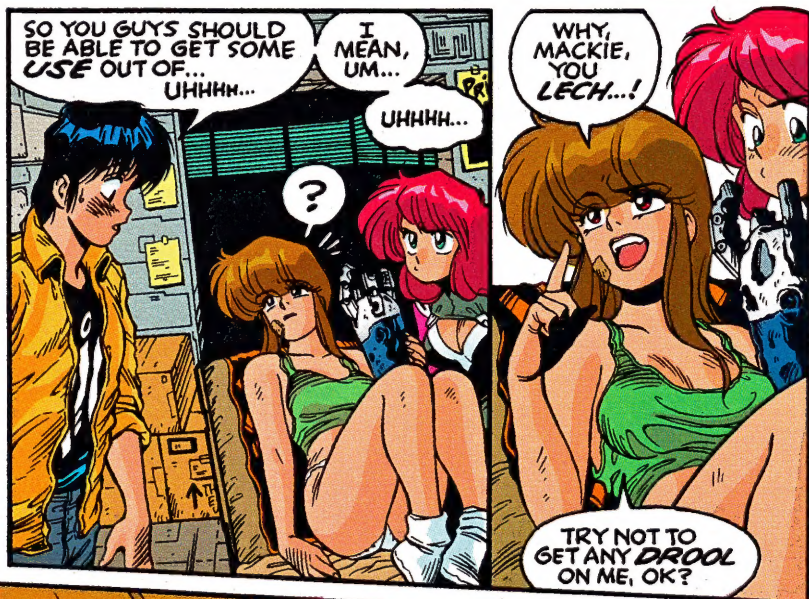
...*'GENOM'S*
USAGE OF NEURO-
LOGICALLY ENHANCED
INTELLECTS'...

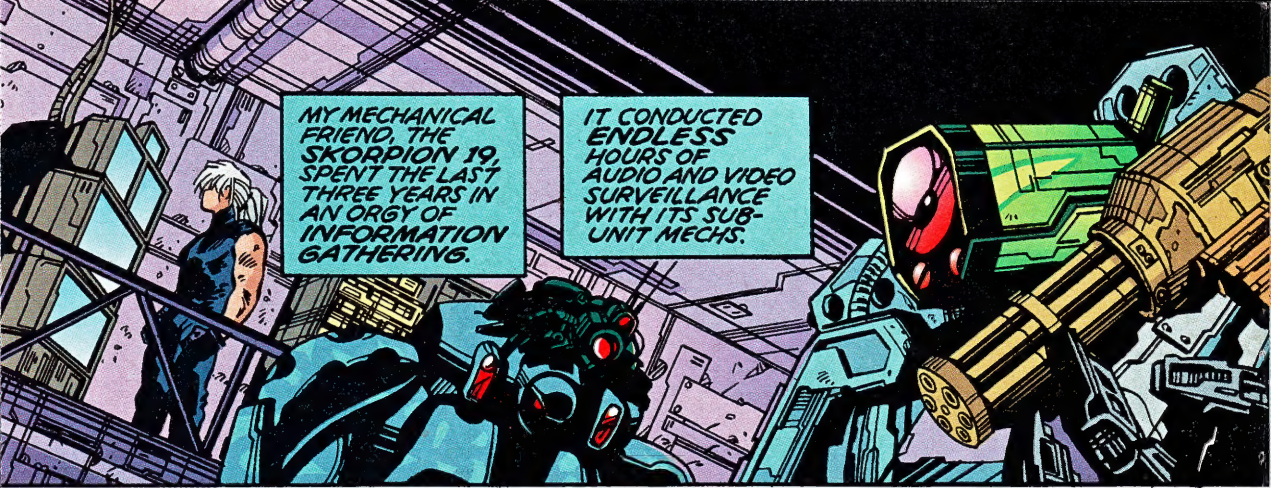


THAT'D BE
LIKE GETTING
HIT BY A
BASEBALL
BAT OVER
EVERY INCH
OF YOUR
BODY...!

NAHH...

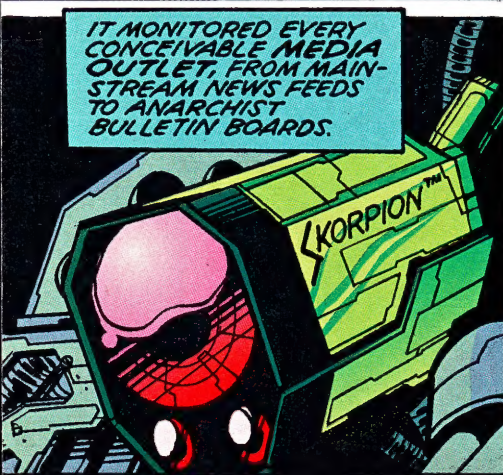
...IT'D BE MORE
LIKE GETTING
HIT BY A
POOL CUE,
I'D SAY...



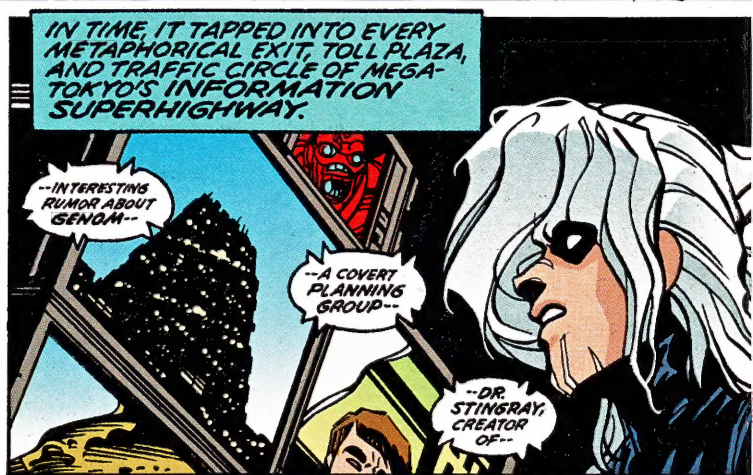


MY MECHANICAL FRIEND, THE SKORPION 19, SPENT THE LAST THREE YEARS IN AN ORGY OF INFORMATION GATHERING.

IT CONDUCTED ENDLESS HOURS OF AUDIO AND VIDEO SURVEILLANCE WITH ITS SUB-UNIT MECHS.



IT MONITORED EVERY CONCEIVABLE MEDIA OUTLET, FROM MAIN-STREAM NEWS FEEDS TO ANARCHIST BULLETIN BOARDS.



IN TIME, IT TAPPED INTO EVERY METAPHORICAL EXIT, TOLL PLAZA, AND TRAFFIC CIRCLE OF MEGA-TOKYO'S INFORMATION SUPERHIGHWAY.

--INTERESTING RUMOR ABOUT GENOM--

--A COVERT PLANNING GROUP--

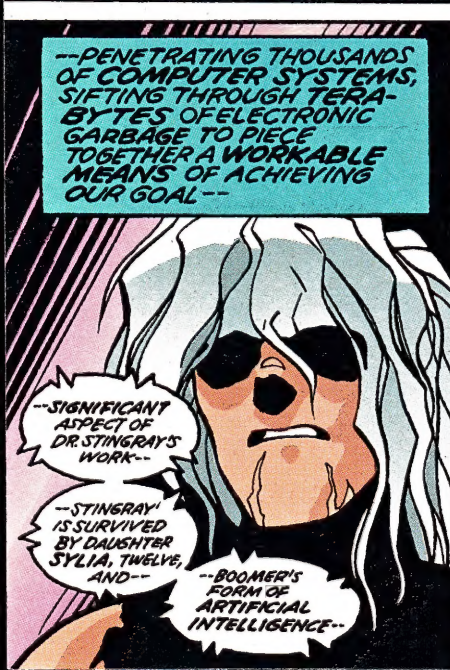
--DR. STINGRAY, CREATOR OF--



JUDGING FROM THESE FILES, THEY'RE EVIDENTLY PLANNING AN "EXTRACTION ATTEMPT"--

--WITH VIRTUALLY NO CHANCE OF SUCCESS--

--TARGETING ONE OF GENOM'S "INTELLECTUAL ASSETS"--

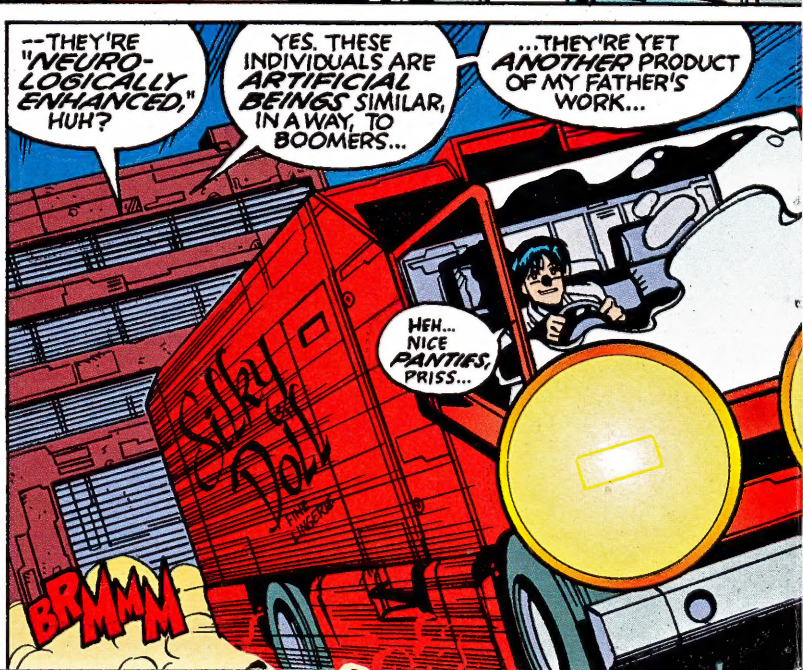


--PENETRATING THOUSANDS OF COMPUTER SYSTEMS, SIFTING THROUGH TERA-BYTES OF ELECTRONIC GARBAGE TO PIECE TOGETHER A WORKABLE MEANS OF ACHIEVING OUR GOAL--

--SIGNIFICANT ASPECT OF DR. STINGRAY'S WORK--

--STINGRAY IS SURVIVED BY DAUGHTER SYLIA, TWELVE, AND--

--BOOMER'S FORM OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE--



--THEY'RE "NEUROLOGICALLY ENHANCED," HUH?

YES, THESE INDIVIDUALS ARE ARTIFICIAL BEINGS SIMILAR, IN A WAY, TO BOOMERS...

...THEY'RE YET ANOTHER PRODUCT OF MY FATHER'S WORK...

HEH... NICE PANTIES, PRISS...

BRMM

--SPICING IN THE DATA FROM THE LOST MEMORY MODULE, THE SKORPION INFODUMPS TO ME VIA AUDIO AND VIDEO SAMPLES ASSEMBLED DURING ITS YEARS OF RECONNAISSANCE.



THE SAMPLING TECHNIQUE'S SOMEWHAT ANNOYING, BUT YOU CAN GET USED TO IT.

VIDEO SAMPLE

--CRITICAL PART OF STINGRAY'S WORK FOR GENOM WAS HIS REPLICATION OF HUMAN CONSCIOUSNESS IN 'BOOMER TECHNOLOGY'--

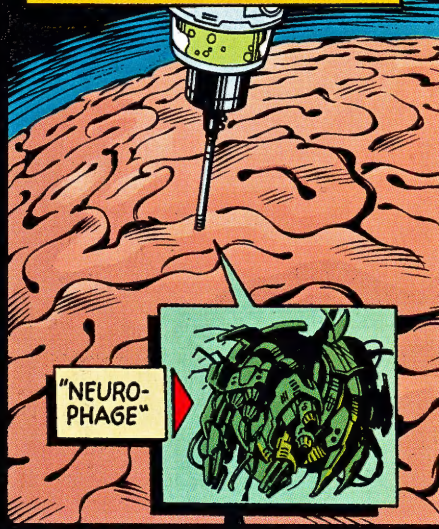
--INSTEAD, MY FATHER TOOK THE ROUTE OF TRYING TO **DIRECTLY** CONVERT HUMAN BRAIN INTO A SOFTWARE ANALOG--



JUST GIVE ME THE **SHORT FORM**, OK?

VIDEO SAMPLE

--STINGRAY'S SO-CALLED "NEUROPHAGE," WHICH WAS AN EXPERIMENTAL BIO-COMPUTER-CONTROLLED **MOLECULAR MACHINE** DESIGNED TO BE INTRODUCED, MILLIONS AT A TIME, INTO A **LIVING BRAIN**--



"NEURO-PHAGE"

VIDEO SAMPLE

--EACH NEUROPHAGE WOULD DISASSEMBLE A **NEURON**, MOLECULE BY MOLECULE, AND REPLACE IT WITH A BIO-COMPUTERIZED DUPLICATE--

--WEIRDLY ENOUGH, HEARING DESCRIPTIONS OF TINY MANMADE CRITTERS **CHEWING** THEIR WAY THROUGH **BRAIN TISSUE**--

--JUST MAKES ME **HUNGRY**--



--REPORTEDLY, STINGRAY WAS ANGERED BY GENOM'S RECKLESS EXPERIMENTATION--

--FAVORED LIMITED TESTING OF NEUROPHAGES ON--

VIDEO SAMPLE

EVENTUALLY, **ALL** TISSUE WOULD BE REPLACED BY A MASS OF NEUROPHAGES THAT WOULD **MIMIC** THE OPERATION OF THE **ORIGINAL BRAIN**--



--RETAINING MOST OF THE SUBJECT'S COGNITIVE, BEHAVIORAL AND EMOTIONAL TRAITS--

NEURON

"NEURO-PHAGE"
(NOT TO SCALE)

--GRADUALLY **INSINUATING** THEMSELVES THROUGH THE **BRAIN'S NEURAL NETWORK**--

ONCE THE CONVERSION WAS COMPLETE, EACH INDIVIDUAL NEUROPHAGE COULD **DOWNLOAD** ITS PARTICULAR DATA TO **EXTERNAL COUNTER-PARTS**.

THIS WAY, **SEPARATE** MASSES OF MOLECULAR BIOCOMPUTERS COULD BE SET UP AS "**COPIES**" OF THE ORIGINAL BRAIN.

VIDEO SAMPLE

--REPORTEDLY, DR. STINGRAY OBJECTED TO GENOM'S USE OF **SIMPLIFIED** AND THEREBY **UNSTABLE**, VERSIONS OF HIS WORK IN THE PRODUCTION BOOMERS--

--BUT DOC STINGRAY HAD **BOLDER AIMS** THAN MERELY **REPLICATING** HUMAN INTELLIGENCE.

NO, HE **ACTUALLY** WANTED TO **DESIGN** AN **IMPROVED** MODEL--

--HE REASONED THAT "**INFINITE FLEXIBILITY**" AND "**NEW MODES OF THOUGHTS**" COULD BE ACHIEVED BY **CONTROLLING** THE NEUROPHAGES' **ARRANGEMENTS**--

--AFTER FATHER'S DEATH, GENOM **CARRIED THROUGH** ON HIS THEORIES--

--AND CREATED SEVERAL BEINGS WITH GREATLY **ENHANCED COGNITIVE** AND **INTUITIVE** POWERS--

DAMN.

VIDEO SAMPLE

--HAS GENOM BEEN UTILIZING THE "**NEUROLOGICALLY ENHANCED**" TO DEFINE ITS CORPORATE STRATEGY?

SOURCES CLAIM THAT **MUCH** OF THE MEGA-CORPORATION'S STUNNING WORLDWIDE SUCCESS MAY BE DUE TO THESE ULTRA-SECRET "**INTELLECTUAL ASSETS**"--

--AND YET, SOMEHOW, I **STILL** DON'T FEEL **APPRECIATED** BY THOSE CRETINS ON THE EXECUTIVE BOARD!

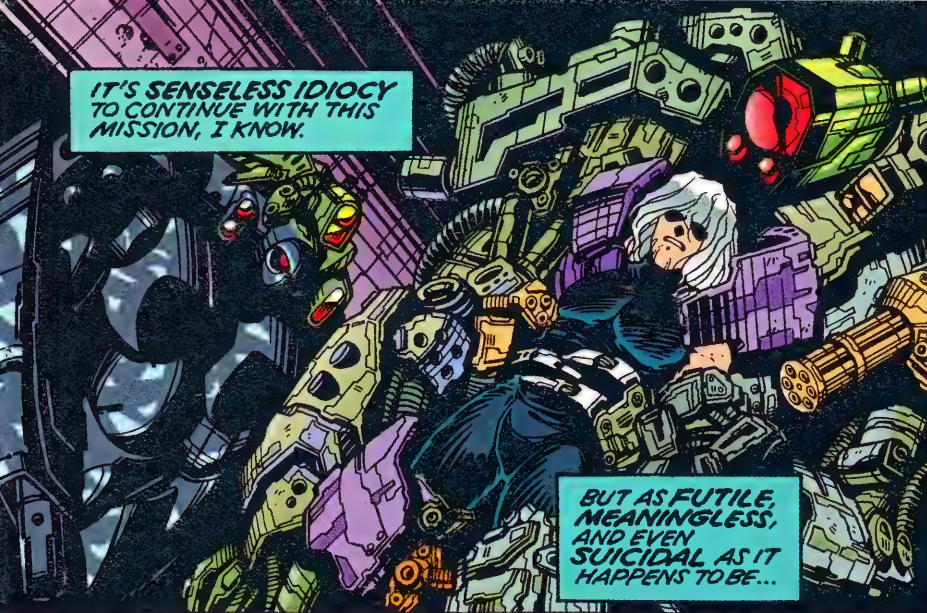
THAT'S IT, **EMBRACE** THE PAIN.

AMAZINGLY, THE SKORPION'S DISCOVERED A WAY TO **CAPTURE** ONE OF THESE "**POSTHUMAN INTELLECTS**"..

...THOUGH, ALAS, THIS BREAK-THROUGH'S COME TOO LATE TO **HELP** OUR ORIGINAL EMPLOYERS.

OH, WELL.

VREEE

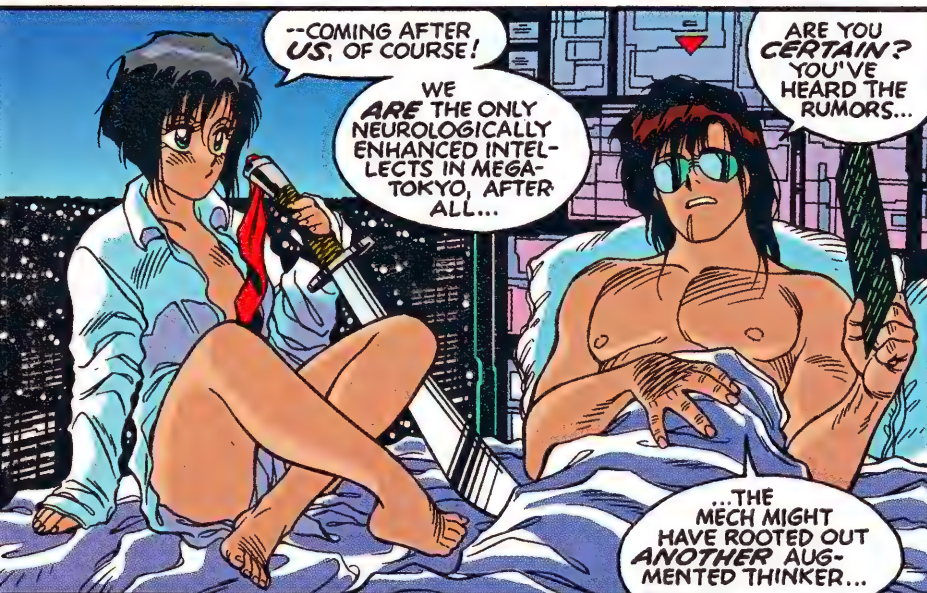


IT'S SENSELESS IDIOCY
TO CONTINUE WITH THIS
MISSION, I KNOW.

BUT AS FUTILE,
MEANINGLESS,
AND EVEN
SUICIDAL AS IT
HAPPENS TO BE...



...THIS IS
MY JOB.



--COMING AFTER
US, OF COURSE!

WE
ARE THE ONLY
NEUROLOGICALLY
ENHANCED INTEL-
LECTS IN MEGA-
TOKYO, AFTER
ALL...

ARE YOU
CERTAIN?
YOU'VE
HEARD THE
RUMORS...

...THE
MECH MIGHT
HAVE ROOTED OUT
ANOTHER AUG-
MENTED THINKER...



...A ROGUE
"INTELLECTUAL
ASSET," IF YOU
WILL...



--WITH AN ATTACK
ON GENOM TOWER
IMMINENT, YOUR
HARDSUIT'S SENSOR
SUITES AND SURVEIL-
LANCE GEAR WILL
BE CRITICAL,
NENE.

AFTER LAST
NIGHT, ARE
YOU FEELING
UP TO
THIS...?

DON'T
WORRY
ABOUT
ME,
SYLIA!



I'M READY
FOR
ANYTHING!

EXCEPT
A FIGHT,
MAYBE...

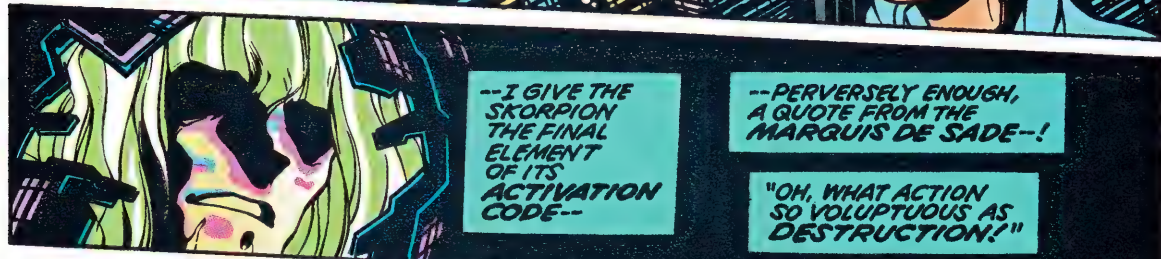
HUSH,
LINNA.



--OR
HE'S ON
HIS WAY
HERE.

EITHER
WAY, THE
ISSUE WILL
BE RESOLVED
SHORTLY--

--NOT TO
MENTION
VIOLENTLY--



--I GIVE THE
SKORPION
THE FINAL
ELEMENT
OF ITS
ACTIVATION
CODE--

--PERVERSELY ENOUGH,
A QUOTE FROM THE
MARGUIS DE SADE--!

"OH, WHAT ACTION
SO VOLUPTUOUS AS
DESTRUCTION!"



ONCE MACKIE COMES BACK,
WE'LL HEAD TO A MONITORING
POST CLOSE BY GENOM
TOWER--

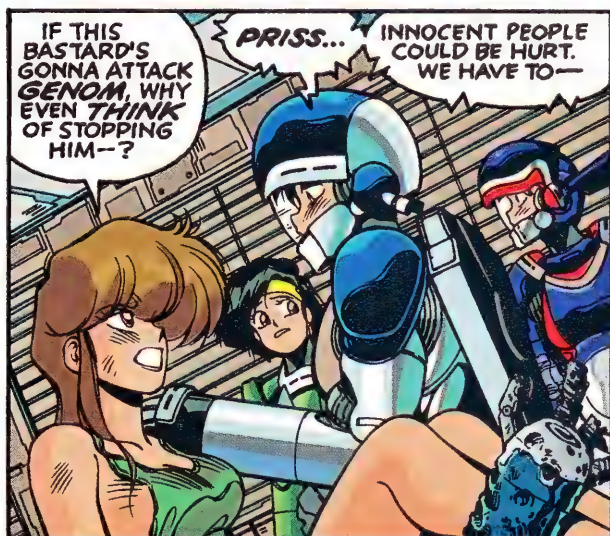
--IN CASE
WE NEED TO
INTERVENE--

WHAT?

ARE
YOU
CRAZY?



"THERE IS NO
ECSTASY
LIKE THE ONE
WE TASTE--"



IF THIS
BASTARD'S
GONNA ATTACK
GENOM, WHY
EVEN THINK
OF STOPPING
HIM--?

PRISS...

INNOCENT PEOPLE
COULD BE HURT.
WE HAVE TO--



HEY, I WANT HIM
DEAD... BUT IF HE
TAKES OUT SOME
GENOM SCUMBAGS
FIRST, ALL THE
BETTER!



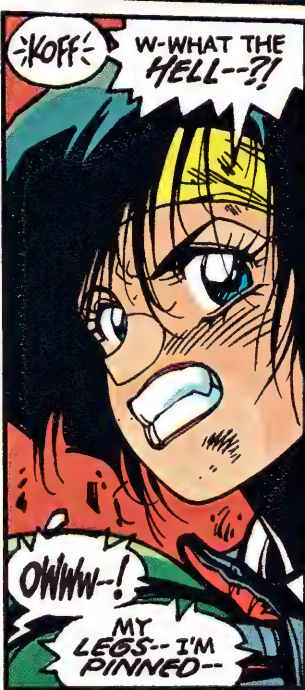
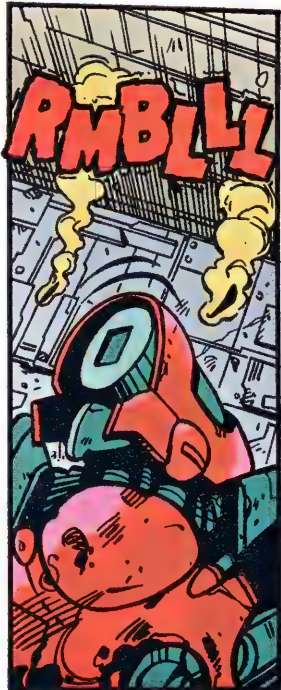
PRISS, THIS MECH
MIGHT TRY TO
DESTROY ITS PREY,
INSTEAD OF CAPTUR-
ING THEM...

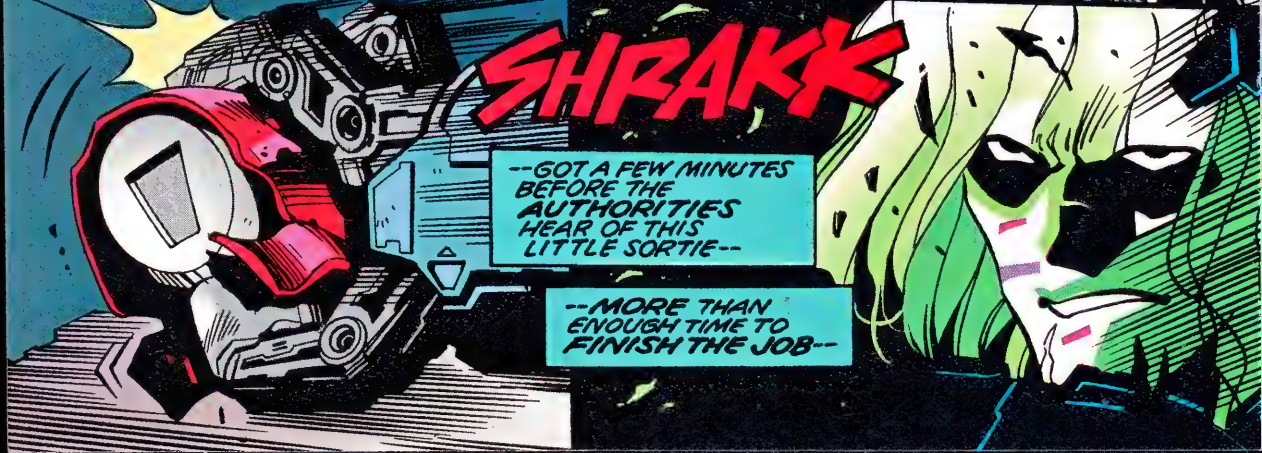
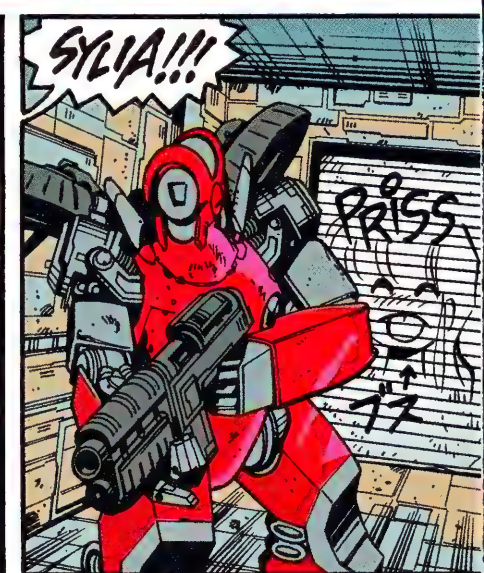
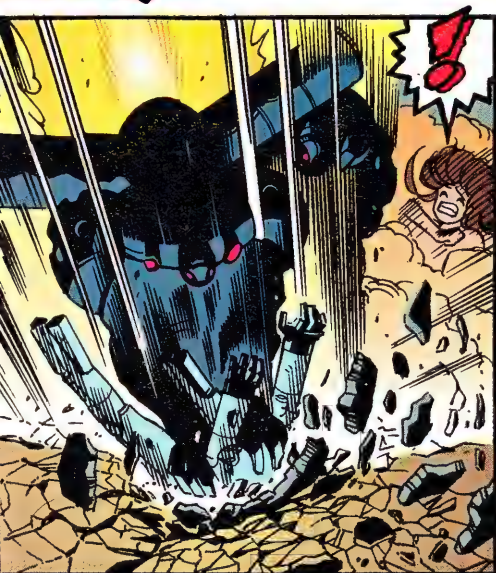
...WE COULD
ALL BE IN
DANGER IF--

"WHEN WE GIVE OURSELVES OVER TO THIS DIVINE INFAMY!"

CHOOM
CHOOM

WHKROOM

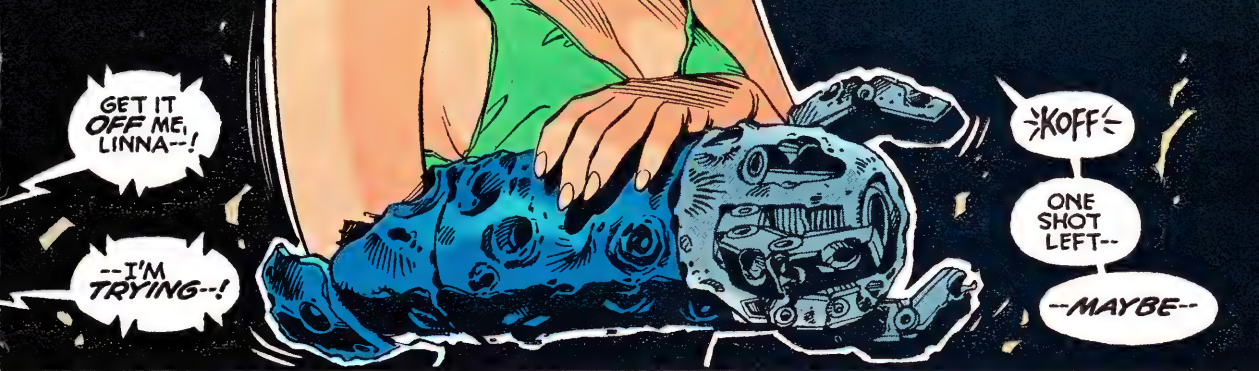




WE'VE CUT
OFF ALL COM-
MUNICATIONS
WITHIN A
TWENTY-BLOCK
RADIUS OF
THIS PLACE--

--GOT A FEW MINUTES
BEFORE THE
AUTHORITIES
HEAR OF THIS
LITTLE SORTIE--

--MORE THAN
ENOUGH TIME TO
FINISH THE JOB--



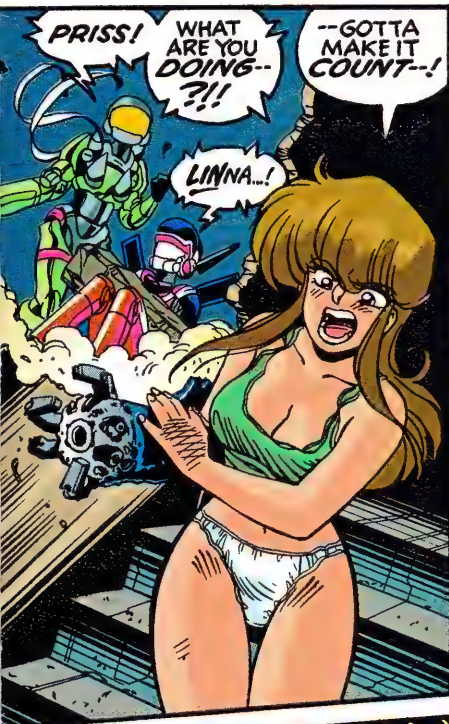
GET IT
OFF ME,
LINNA--!

--I'M
TRYING--!

=KOFF=

ONE
SHOT
LEFT--

--MAYBE--



PRISS!

WHAT
ARE YOU
DOING--
?!!

--GOTTA
MAKE IT
COUNT--!

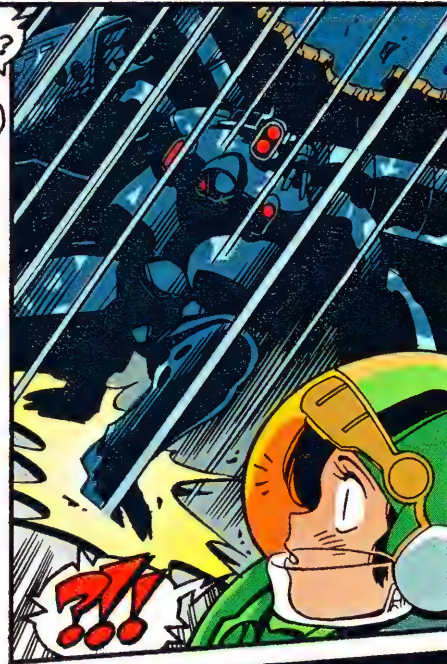
LINNA...!



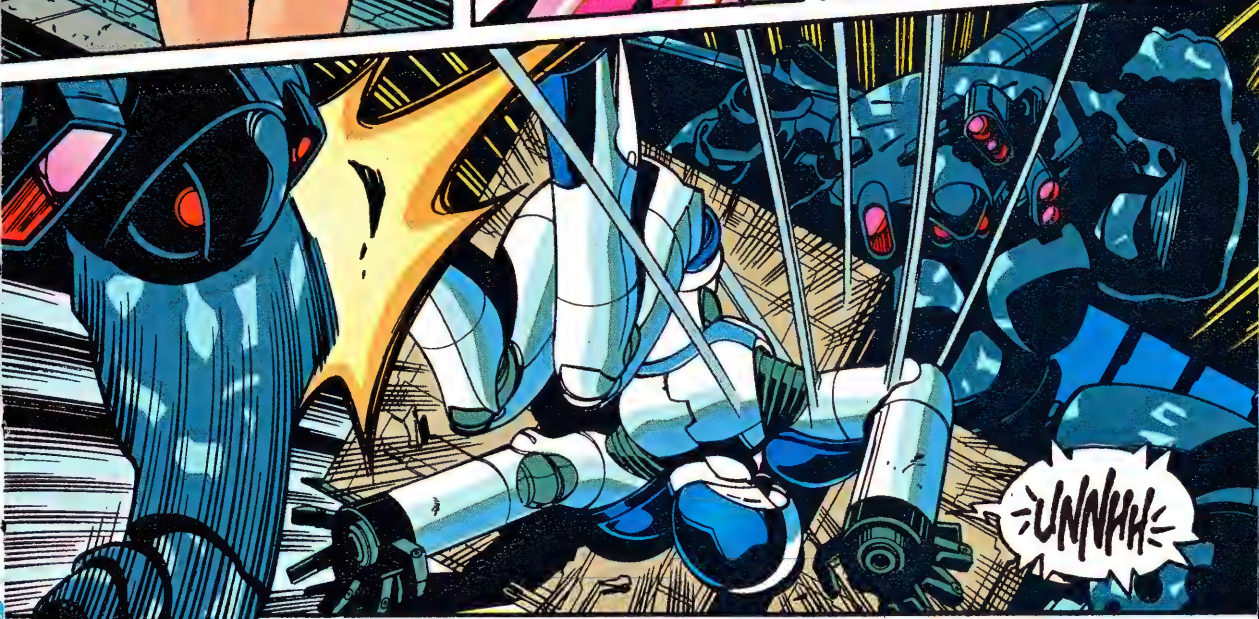
IS SHE
INSANE--?

=HNNH=

OH,
NO--!

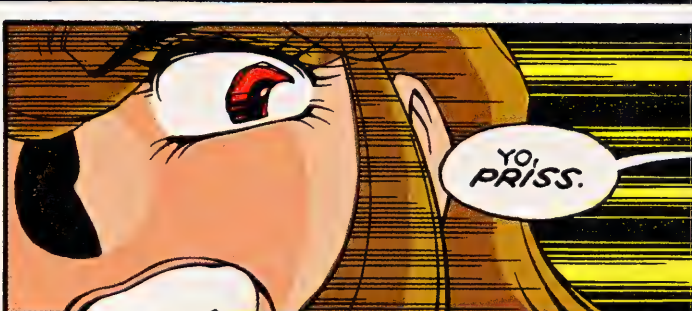
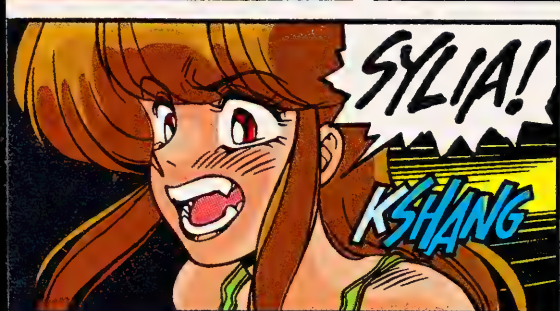
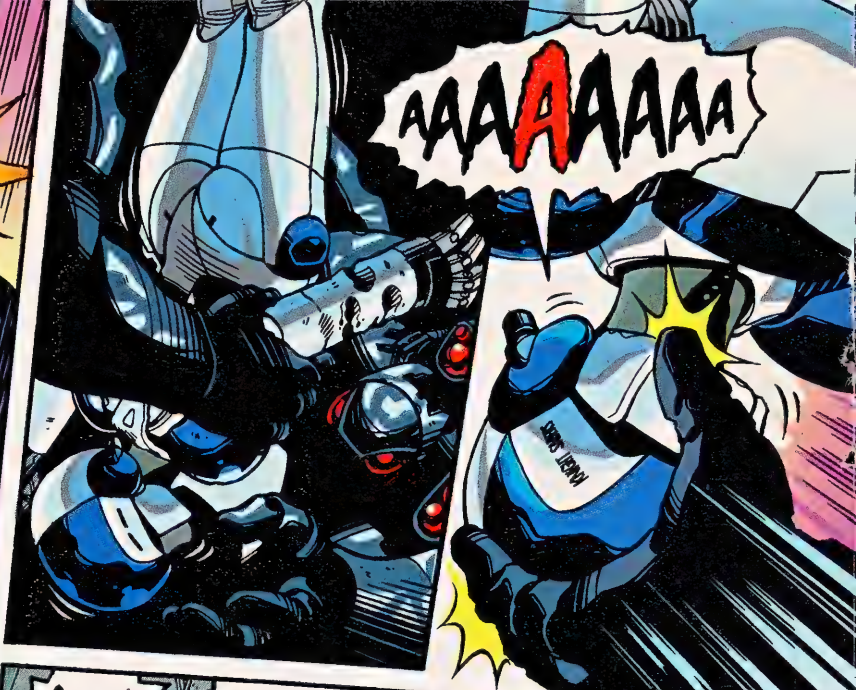
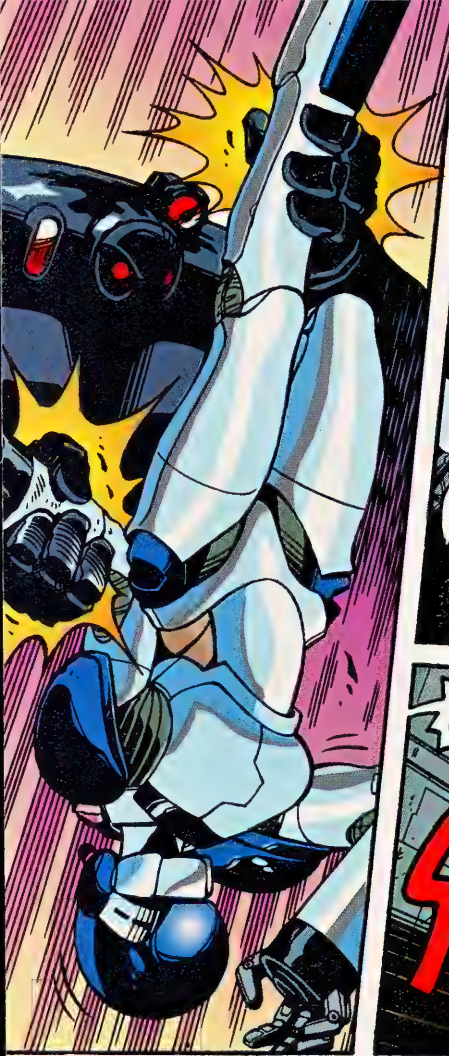


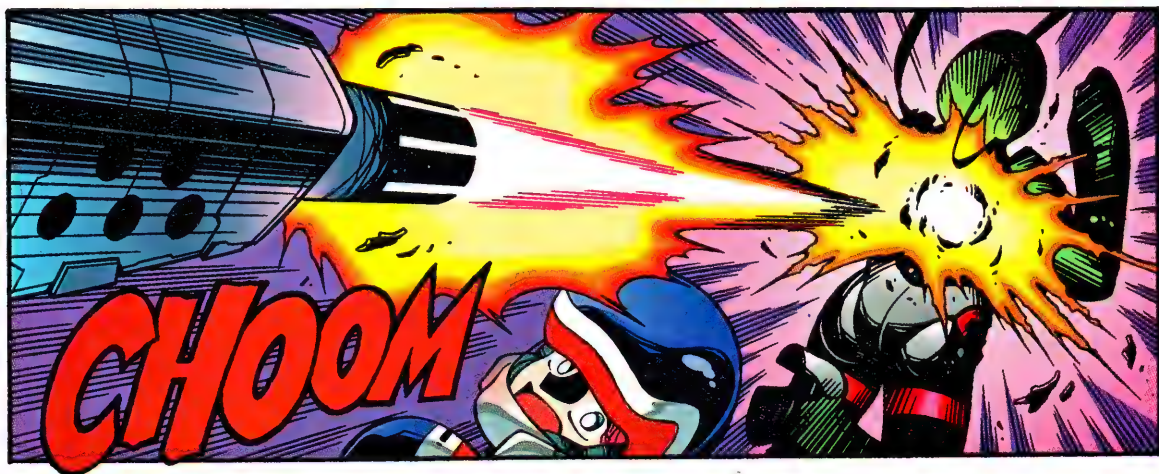
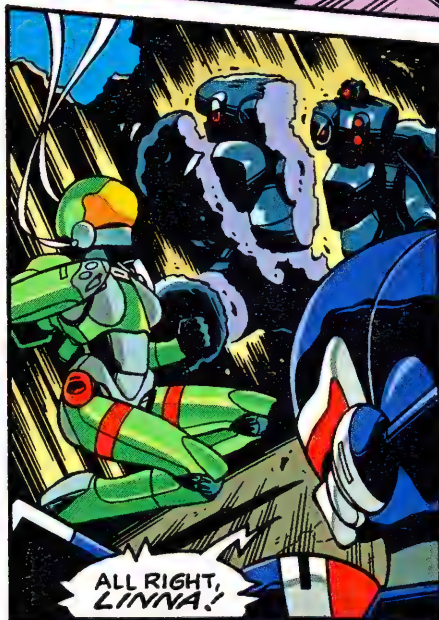
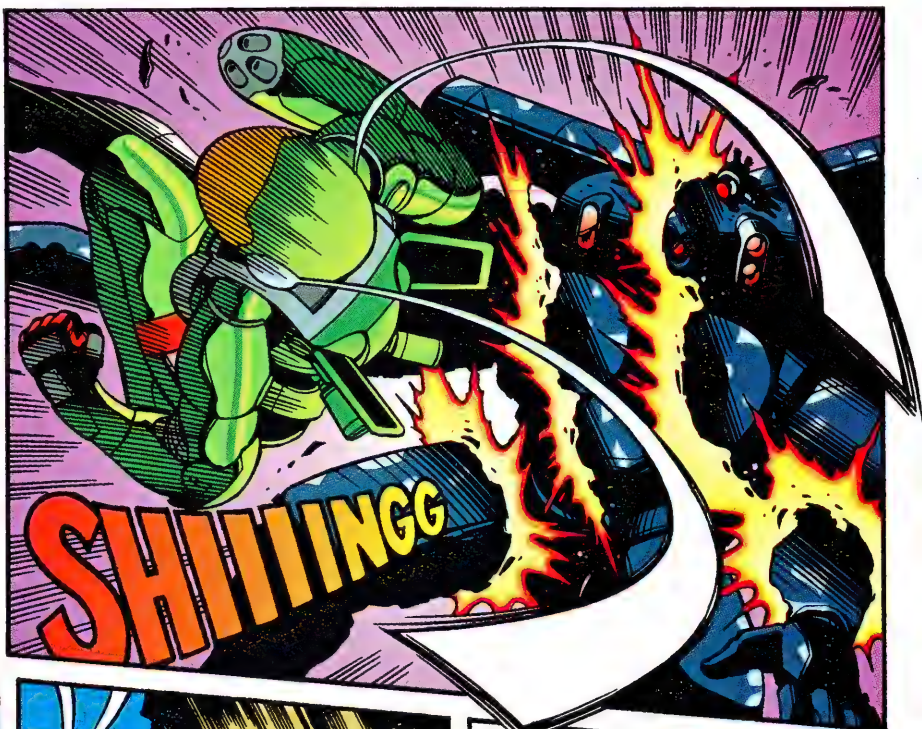
???

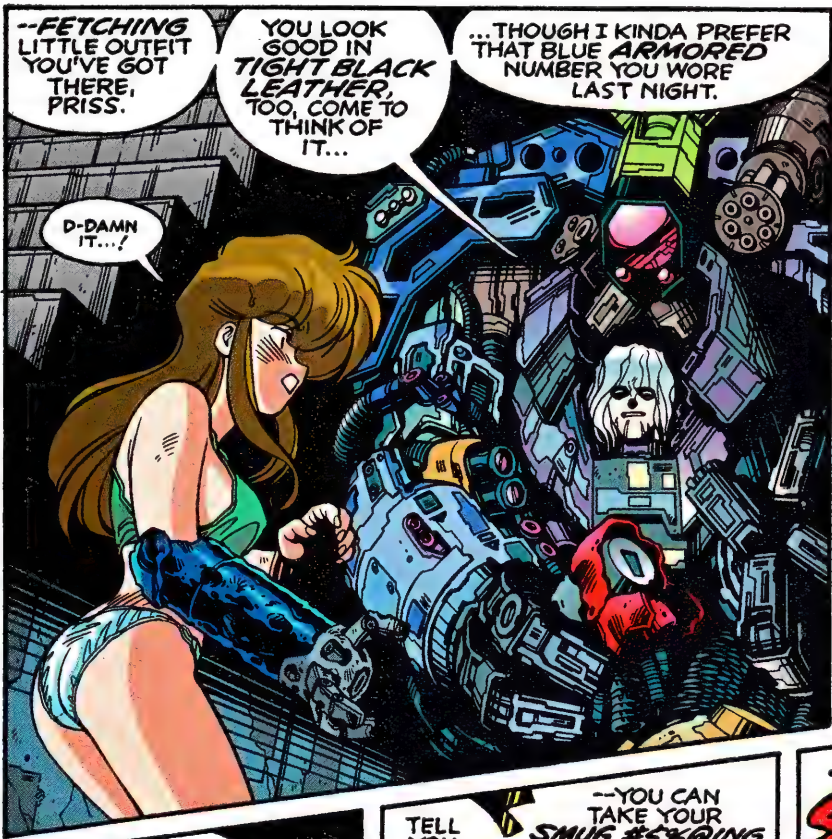


=UNNHH=









--FETCHING
LITTLE OUTFIT
YOU'VE GOT
THERE,
PRISS.

YOU LOOK
GOOD IN
**TIGHT BLACK
LEATHER,**
TOO, COME TO
THINK OF
IT...

...THOUGH I KINDA PREFER
THAT **BLUE ARMORED**
NUMBER YOU WORE
LAST NIGHT.

D-DAMN
IT...!



GOT THE INFODUMP ON
THIS "**KNIGHT
SABERS**" THING
YOU'RE INTO...

...PRETTY
SILLY STUFF,
ISN'T IT?



YOU'D
BEST LEAVE THE
SERIOUS WORK
FOR US ADULTS,
OKAY?

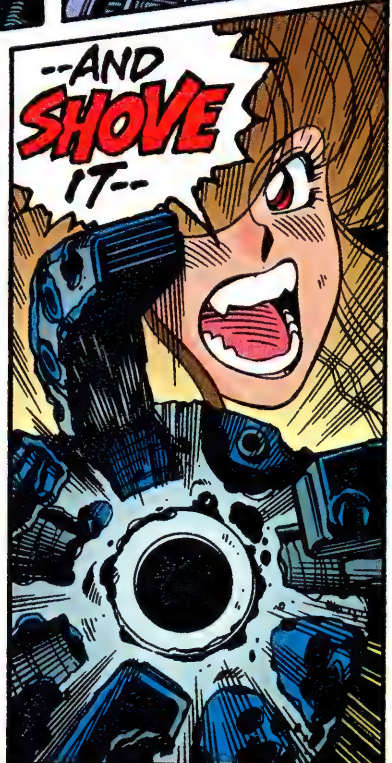
YOU'
COULD GET
HURT!

HUNH--!



TELL
YOU
WHAT,
DICK-
WEED--

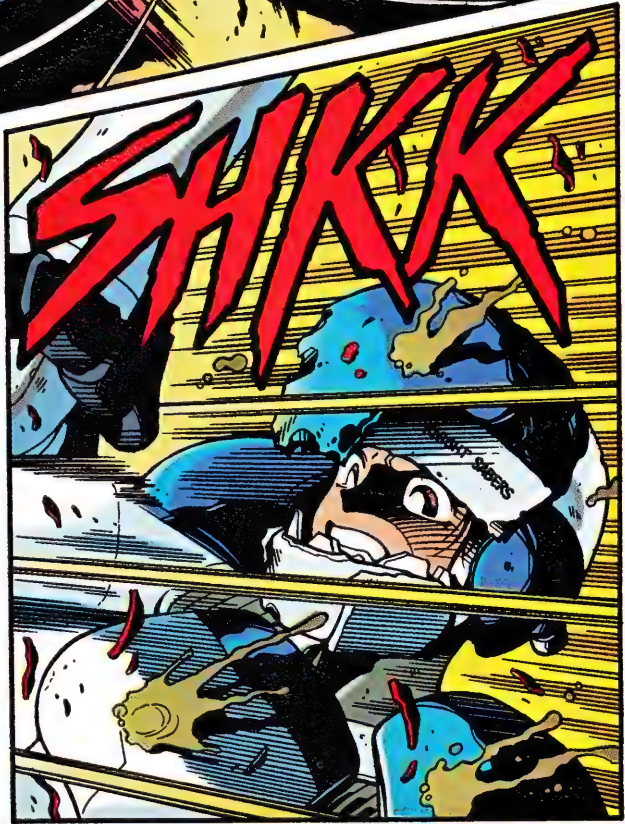
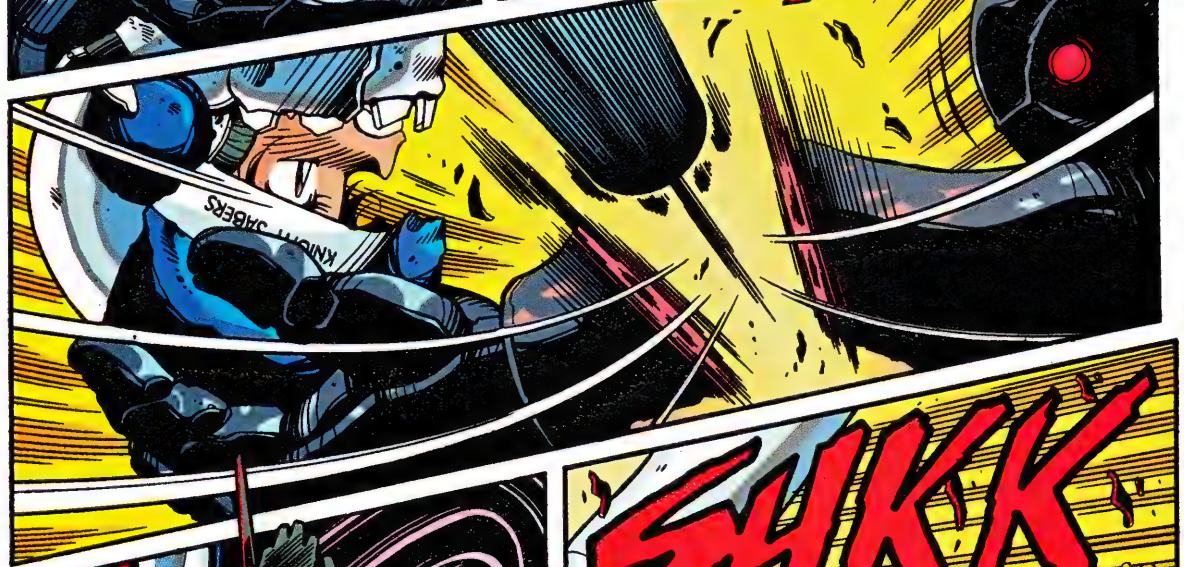
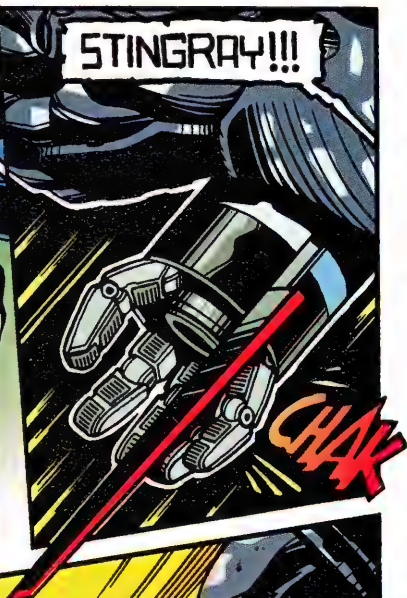
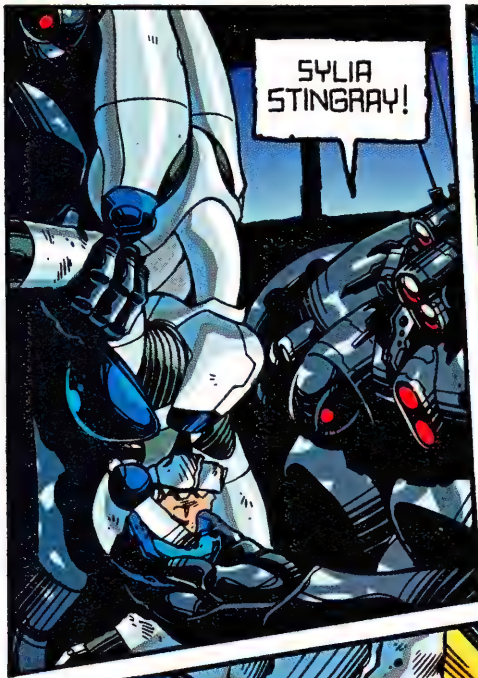
--YOU CAN
TAKE YOUR
SMUG #5%ING
CONDESCEN-
SION--



--AND
SHOVE
IT--



SYLIA
STINGRAY?





--M-MECH'S
GOTTA BE RUNNING
THOSE BOOMERS
BY REMOTE
LINK--!

SHOULD
BE ABLE TO
JAM THE
SIGNAL--



--OR
OVERRIDE
IT--

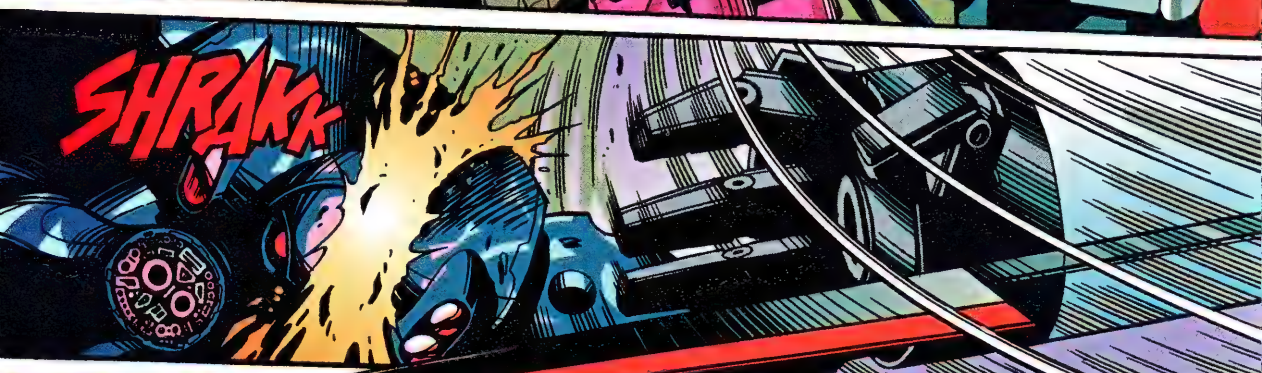
--B-BUT
THE SIGNAL'S
FREQUENCY-
HOPPING--!



N-NO--
PLEASE--

--DON'T--

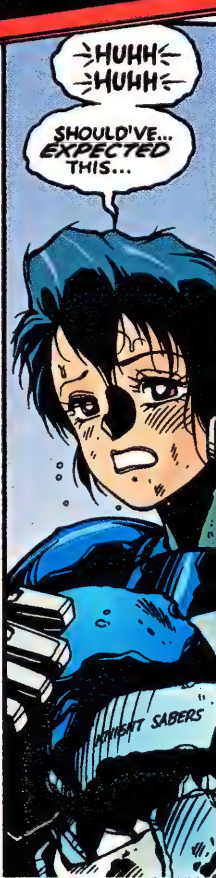
--DON'T--



SHRAKK



KEHAK

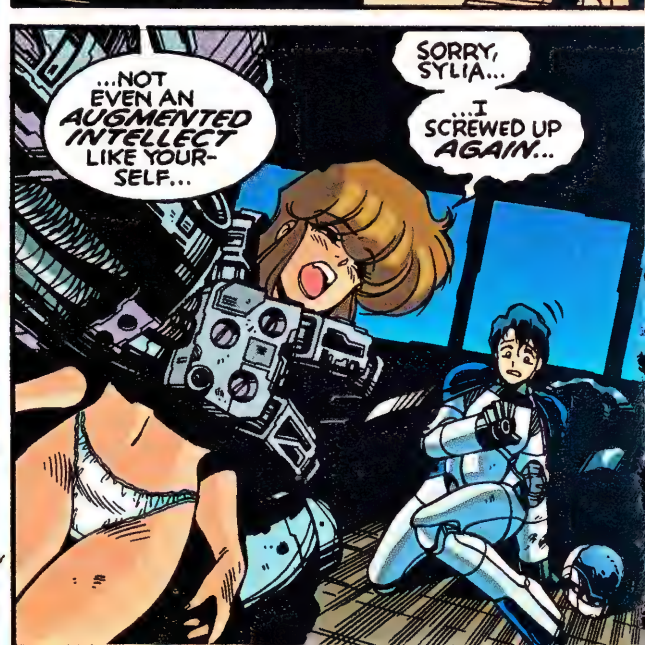


≡HUHH≡
≡HUHH≡

SHOULD'VE...
EXPECTED
THIS...



HEY,
NOBODY'S
PERFECT,
SYLIA...



...NOT
EVEN AN
AUGMENTED
INTELLECT
LIKE YOUR-
SELF...

SORRY,
SYLIA...

...I
SCREWED UP
AGAIN...



DIDN'T HAVE TO GO TO GENOM TOWER TO FIND ONE OF THE NEUROLOGICALLY ENHANCED, AFTER ALL...

...JUST HAD TO LOOK FOR YOU...!



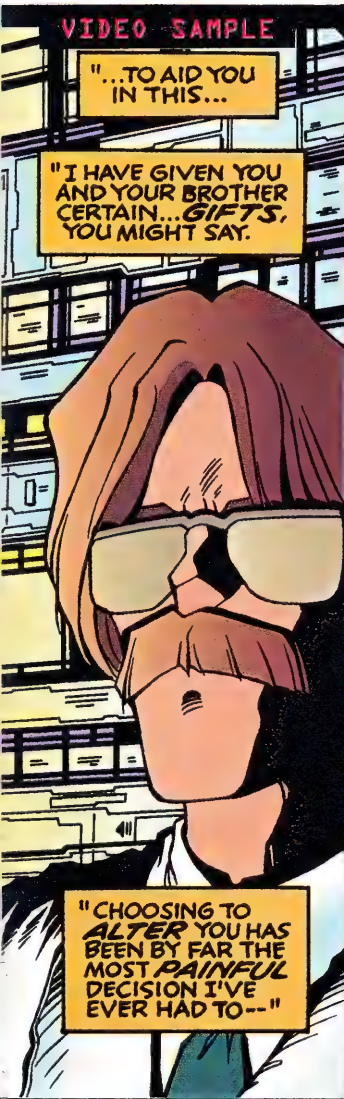
DADDY JUST COULDN'T STOP HIMSELF, COULD HE?

STINGRAY HAD TO GIVE HIS LITTLE GIRL SOME VERSION OF HIS NEUROPHAGE TREATMENT...



...NICE GUY, EXPERIMENTING ON HIS OWN CHILDREN...!

WHY, I EVEN READ ALL ABOUT IT IN YOUR NOT-SO-PRIVATE RECORDS, SYLIA...



VIDEO SAMPLE

"...TO AID YOU IN THIS..."

"I HAVE GIVEN YOU AND YOUR BROTHER CERTAIN... GIFTS, YOU MIGHT SAY."

"CHOOSING TO ALTER YOU HAS BEEN BY FAR THE MOST PAINFUL DECISION I'VE EVER HAD TO--"



--SKORPION'S BEEN TRACKING YOU FOR YEARS--



--KEEPING A CAREFUL WATCH ON YOUR GOOFY CRUSADE--

--UNTIL WE COULD REEL YOU IN.



LISTEN, YOU MERCENARY BASTARD--

--MY "CRUSADE" IS ALL THAT'S STOPPING GENOM FROM--

YEAH, RIGHT.



I'M SURE THAT THE VERY THOUGHT OF A COUPLE OF CUTE GIRLS PRANCING AROUND IN HIGH-HEELED ARMOR IS GONNA PUT THE FEAR OF GOD--



--INTO THE MOST POWERFUL COMMERCIAL ENTITY IN HUMAN HISTORY--!

D-DAMN IT--!

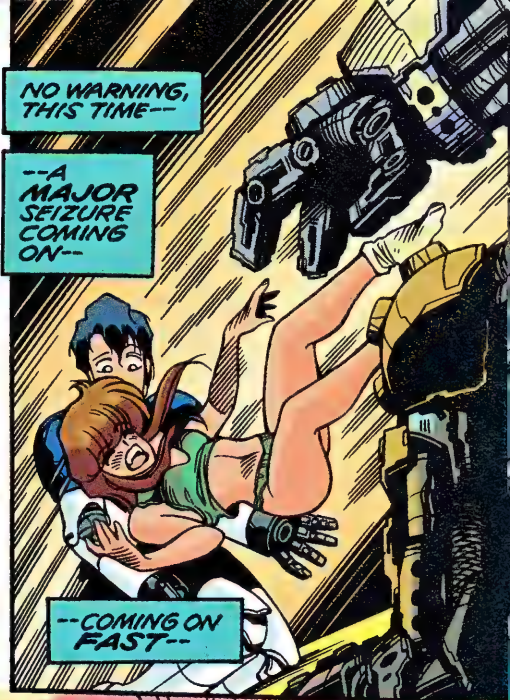
YOU SAID YOU HATED GENOM!



WHY ARE YOU
ATTACKING
THE ONLY ONES
FIGHTING
THEM--?!

SHIT!

A HALLUCINATION--!



NO WARNING,
THIS TIME--

--A
MAJOR
SEIZURE
COMING
ON--

--COMING ON
FAST--



--FAST--

--GOING
UNDER--

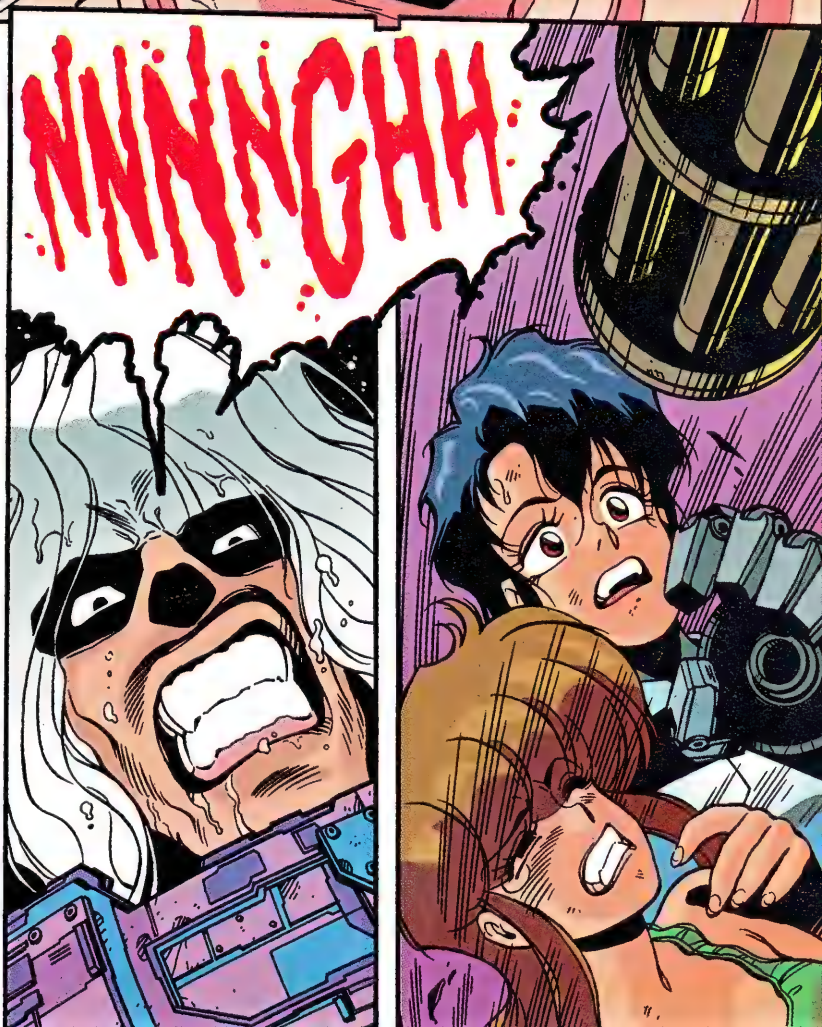
--DAMN IT--

GNNNGGH



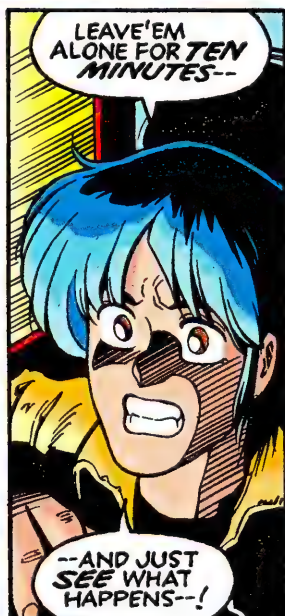
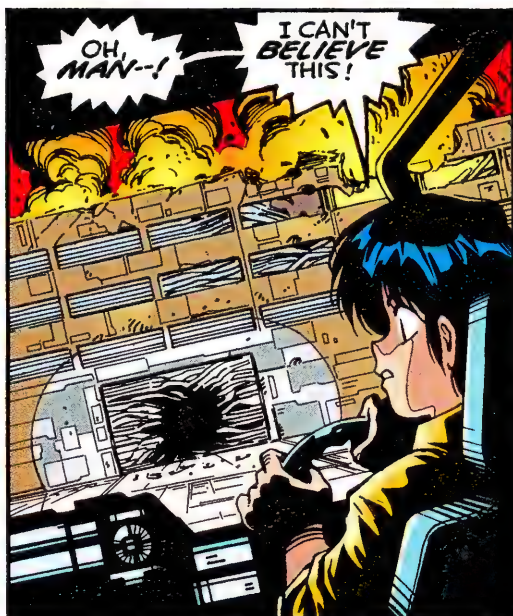
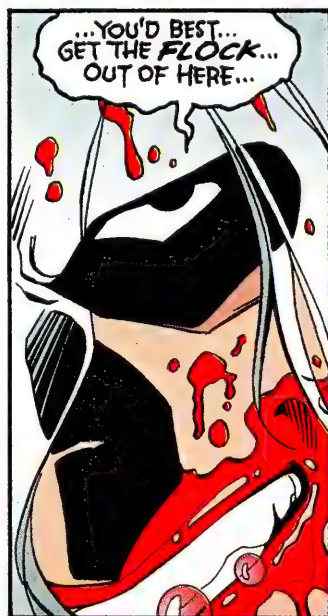
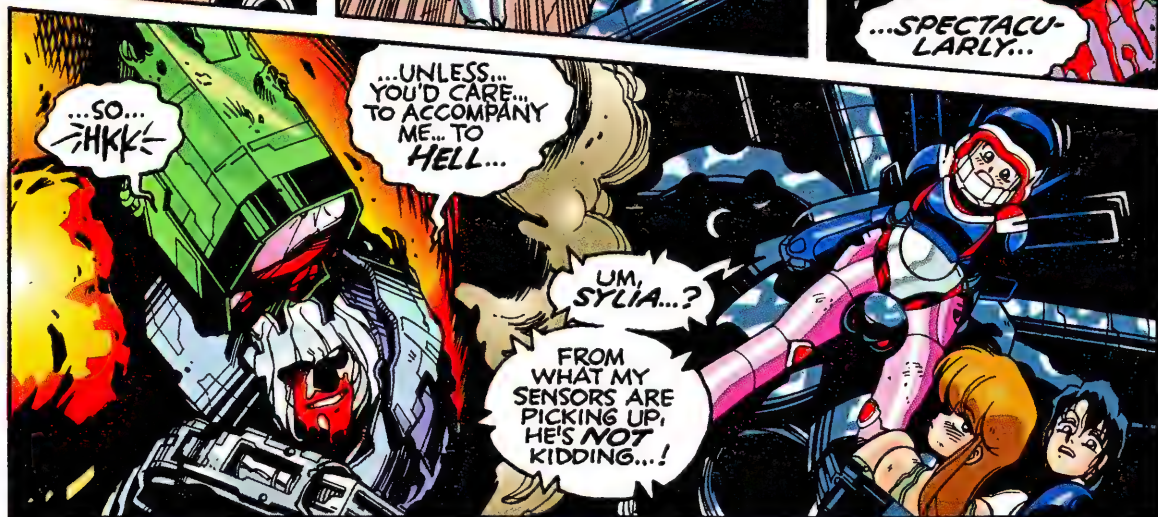
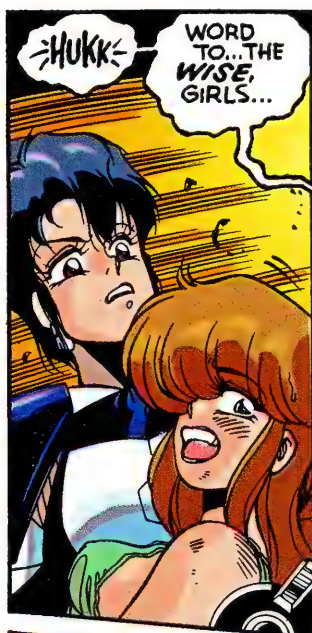
NNOHH

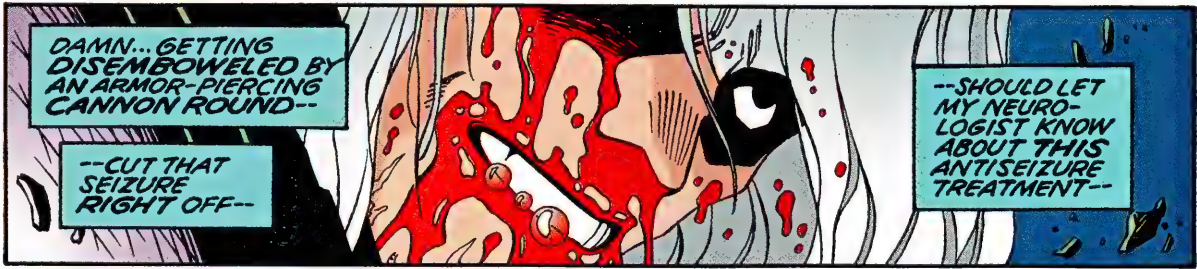
NNGH



NNNNGHH







DAMN... GETTING
DISEMBOWELED BY
AN ARMOR-PIERCING
CANNON ROUND--

--CUT THAT
SEIZURE
RIGHT OFF--

--SHOULD LET
MY NEURO-
LOGIST KNOW
ABOUT THIS
ANTISEIZURE
TREATMENT--



--WHAT
HAPPENED
TO YOU
GUYS--?!

...DON'T
ASK...

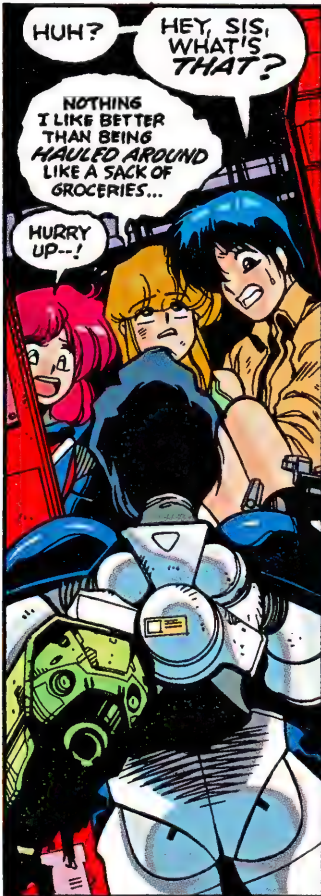
MACKIE!
I SAVED
THE DAY!

WE'RE
GETTING
OUT OF
HERE,
NOW--



--DEATH--

--IT'S THE ONE
SURE CURE
FOR WHAT
AILS YOU--

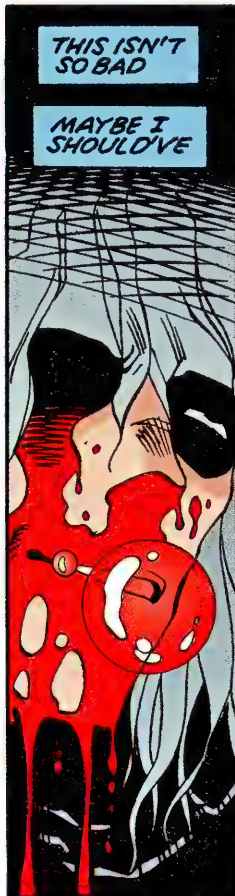


HUH?

HEY, SIS,
WHAT'S
THAT?

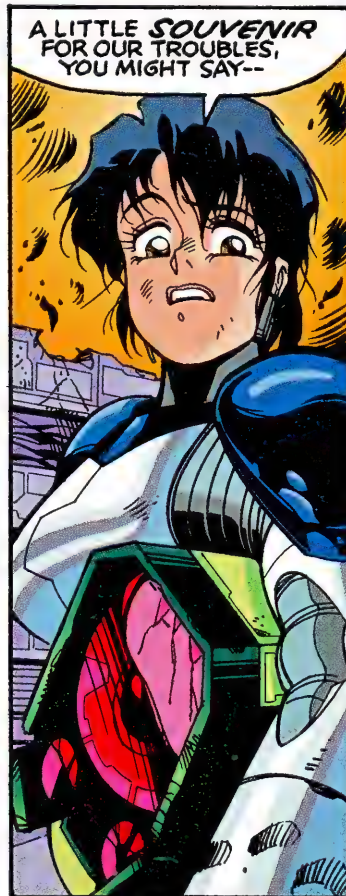
NOTHING
I LIKE BETTER
THAN BEING
HAULED AROUND
LIKE A SACK OF
GROCERIES...

HURRY
UP--!



THIS ISN'T
SO BAD

MAYBE I
SHOUL'DVE



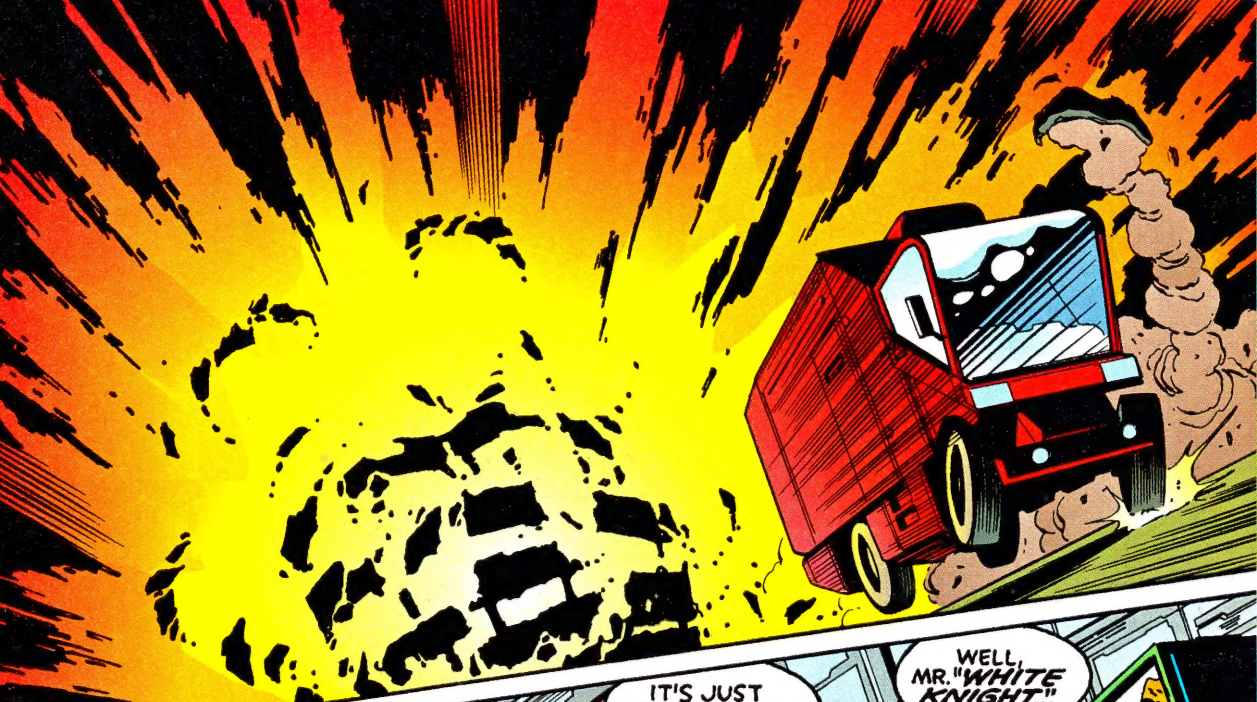
A LITTLE SOUVENIR
FOR OUR TROUBLES,
YOU MIGHT SAY--



DONE THIS

SOONER

POP



JEEZ, SYLIA...

...I'M SORRY ABOUT YOUR, UM, BUILDING...!

YEAH...

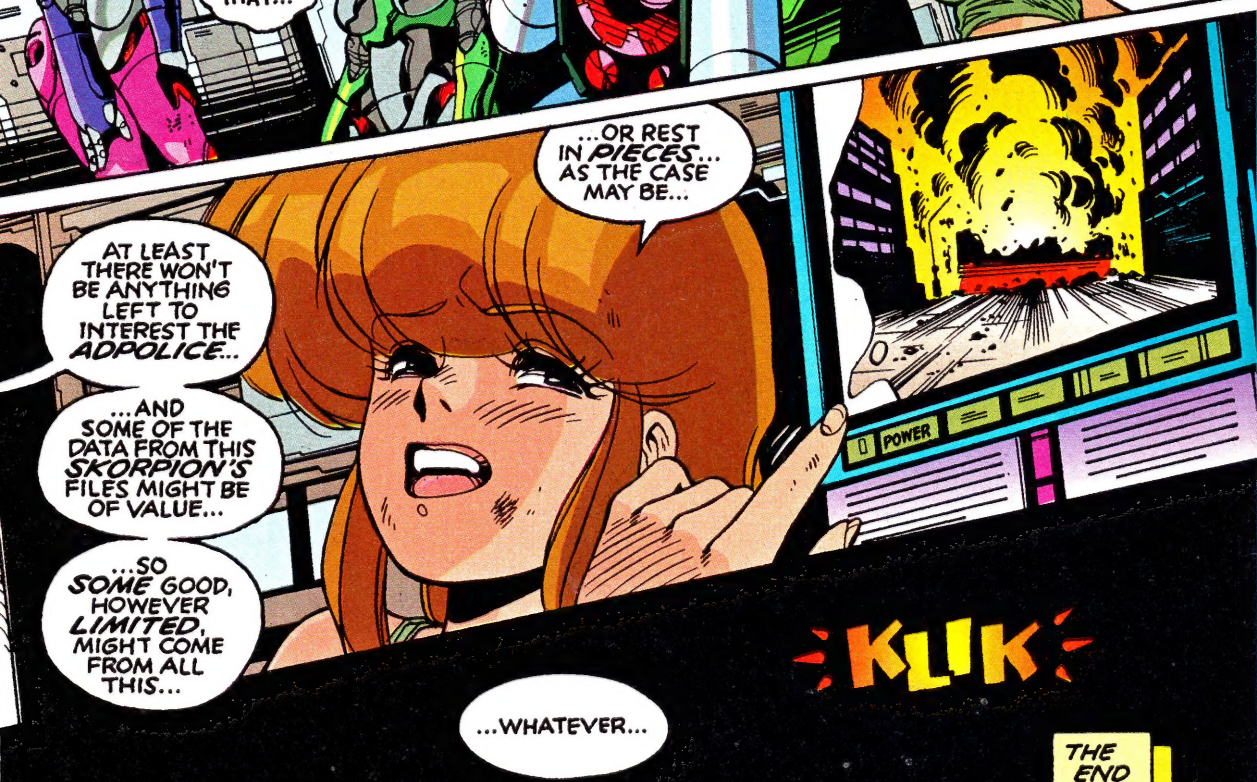
...SORRY 'BOUT THAT...

IT'S JUST ONE OF MY PROPERTIES...

...I'LL SURVIVE THE LOSS.

WELL, MR. "WHITE KNIGHT..."

...REST IN PEACE...



...OR REST IN *PIECES*... AS THE CASE MAY BE...

AT LEAST THERE WON'T BE ANYTHING LEFT TO INTEREST THE ADPOLICE...

...AND SOME OF THE DATA FROM THIS SKORPION'S FILES MIGHT BE OF VALUE...

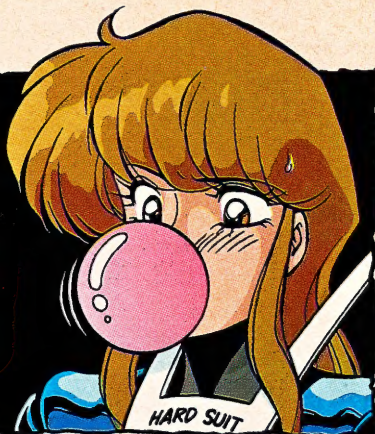
...SO SOME GOOD, HOWEVER LIMITED, MIGHT COME FROM ALL THIS...

...WHATEVER...

KLIK

word balloons

c/o Dark Horse Comics 10956 S.E. Main St., Milwaukie, Or. 97222



Edward Martin III here. Welcome to the final installment of Word Balloons (at least until the next **Bubblegum Crisis** miniseries — hint, hint, hint!). You might have noticed the impressive list of guest inkers in this issue. I want to thank each and every one of them for helping Adam out with this book. I have never worked with an artist as hard-working as Adam and I think you readers will agree that it shows.

Based on the published page count, here's Adam's list of cameos, appearing in **BGC #1**: Deirdre appears on pages 1, 14, 17, 19, & 29. Yuri and Kei appear on page 16. Yuri appears solo on page 1. Quincy appears twice on page 4. Cory Emerson appears on pages 5 and (with Gina) 28. Shasti appears on pages 13 & 19. Dr. Haynes and Dr. Yuri appear on page 14. Ted Danson does not appear on page 14, but I'm sending a really weird prize to the reader who thought he did (you know who you are). No one noticed Bill Gates next to him, either, but who would? Kevin J. Sleet appears on page 15. Vision appears on page 17. Grey, Minnie May, and Bean Bandit appear on page 29. This is the list Adam made. He knows what he drew.

No one person found every reference, but congratulations to Kay Sakamoto of Loomis, California, who damn near found them all. Way to go, Kay! Your prize, a copy of the video **Bubblegum Crisis #1**, should have arrived by the time this is printed. Thanks for playing!

Thanks to Barbara Bonkofsky, Matthieu Bortolin, William Burgess, Lionel Chan, Alice Edwards, Kahlil English, Megan Fujisaka, Hugo Gonzales, Tony Higgins, Mike Hines, Thomas Lee, Barry Money, Kiyoshi Okuma, F. John Oppliger, Hollie Anne Sargent, Jackie K. Southerland, & James Taylor who all did swell in the contest. It was a pretty close thing all the way down the line.

Thanks also to Louie Ambriz, Jr., Edmund Balan, Tatsuo Berekku, Jason Cooke, Andrew Crofton, Malcolm Earle, Andrew Floyd, Joey Gohu, Daniel Hammar, John Kim, Jonathan Lam, Fred Lui, Robert G. Packard, Gregg Pirazzini, A. J. Sharpe, Andrew Sievert, & Michael Ulm who also wrote in. I read every letter, even the anonymous one from Alameda (gotcha!).

With so many letters this time around, it seemed best to just pull excerpts, so here we go!

As a longtime fan of both Dark Horse and Adam Warren, I was still stunned by the awesome art and writing of issue #1. I realize, of course, that there are a few hard-core "mangaphiles" who won't buy this book simply because it's in color. 'Too bad; they don't know what they're missing.

— Kay Sakamoto

Glad you liked it, Kay. Don't miss Adam's next **Dirty Pair** series (which he describes below), which I expect to be full color. Regarding the hard-core 'philes, well, all I can tell you is that I'll never be able to please everyone all the time. Such is life.

What does "Grand Mal" mean?

— Jackie K. Southerland

Grand mal is a form of epilepsy characterized by severe seizures and loss of consciousness. It is not fun. It is, however, screamingly appropriate.

After spending a number of minutes in front of a mirror... I really cannot understand how anyone could possibly see the molars of the lower jaw from the kind of perspective you gave Priss on the front cover.

— Joey Gohu

Priss has the ability to make her molars visible from any angle. She tries not to use said ability too often, however, as it tends to freak people out. But 'sometimes, y'know, she just can't help herself...

Does Priss smoke? Stop giving them lips! Most manga characters have no lips...

— Tatsuo Berekku

Then how do they shout "Man the Buffalo Pump" during emergencies? How do they whistle? How do they hide their molars?

The cover airbrushing added a smooth sky touch. What are the possibilities of that being used inside?

— Andrew E. Sievert

Some of the effects we use inside the book, Andrew, are very similar to large blends like the cover. You might especially notice some effects used on the hardsuits and the mechs. Roughly once a week, our production department announces some new kind of cool effect that they can do and it always blows my mind. Not that that's too difficult.

If you're going to have the characters cuss, then go ahead and print it.

— Barbara Bonkofsky

Barbara, we didn't edit that. It was clipped by the news show that was interviewing Priss. There was a big argument between the interviewer and the station manager. The manager wanted it out and the interviewer wanted it in. Her argument was that it was an excellent example of Priss' attitude. The manager won in the end and the only transmitted clip was edited. I suppose the Skorpion could have re-dubbed it back in, but why bother. It was only out there to collect data, not modify it.

It was killer!

— Robert Packard

Don't pull any punches, Robert. Tell us how you really feel!

I applaud the use of colorizing by computer; it fits with the need for smooth chrome effects on the Boomers and Hardsuits.

— Tony Higgins

Actually, I cheated a little and took this quote slightly out of context. Overall, Tony, you were a little critical of the use of color in this book, but did admit that it had its place. I just wanted to use your quote to illustrate my earlier point.

The fact is, you can't label a comic 'manga' if the artwork wasn't done by the Japanese themselves.

— Jason Cooke

All of Dark Horse's manga is from Japan (unless Shirow is really from Brooklyn and I'm dimmer than a forty-watt bulb). The actual lettering and translation is done in the States, but how picky can we get. **Bubblegum Crisis: Grand Mal** is, to my knowledge, a comic book based on characters and events from a Japanese video series. It's not written or drawn or colored or published in Japan, so isn't, by definition, manga. That aside, did you like it?

How do those huge Boomers manage to condense into a human form? What technique was used to get the extremely bright colors in your comic?

— Alice Edwards

The easiest way to do this, Alice, is to wash the Boomer in very hot water and dry at a high temperature. Most shrink right up, no problem. Our comic colors come from a state-of-the-art computerized palette containing more than a hundred million colors, mastered by Joe Rosas and translated by our production crew here at Dark Horse. Furthermore, the stripping crew that prepares the film makes sure the colors stay as vibrant as possible and finally, our printer makes certain the correct ink is used with the paper to maintain the high print quality that Dark Horse demands.

Priss... seems to have a badder attitude in the comic than her anime counterpart. Not that that's bad or anything.

— Gregg Pirazzini

Is it just me or does Priss seem more psychotic than normal (not that I mind)?

— Andrew Crofton

You're both right, as is everyone who pointed out that Priss rarely (if ever) smoked in any of the animes. The simple fact of the matter is that Priss, being the bad girl she is, probably smokes up a storm. A lot of people smoke, especially if they're rebels. It's an attitude thing. I find it very interesting that both of you ended your comments with a disclaimer of sorts, as if you are, perhaps, afraid someone might read it. Someone... psychotic, perhaps?

It seems that the use of screentones is a painstaking process. Is it possible that this tedious work can be lifted through the help of computers?

— Fred Lui

Indeed it is, Fred, and there are ways to avoid it using computers. In fact, we've done it on a number of occasions in such books as **Dark Horse Presents** (#84 being the most recent example). It doesn't so much save time as it makes someone else take the time. While Adam or Tomoko might not have to lay out the screentones, the art is still scanned into the computer and "colored" (although the colors are shades of black) by someone and this takes even longer than laying out screentones. So much for technology.

And a few final words from Adam...

Hello! Adam Warren here, with a postscript of sorts...

First, I must abase myself before this issue's all-star list of guest inkers. Harry Candelario, Dave Johnson, Tom Raney, Karl Story, and Brad Vancata all graciously came to my aid, taking vicious pay cuts in the process, and saved **Grand Mal** #4 from the nightmarish prospect of shipping late (knock on wood). A hearty "Huzzah" goes out to all those kind-hearted gents!

Next, let me grovel before you, dear readers, and express my more-or-less fervent hope that you enjoyed **Bubblegum Crisis: Grand Mal**. Despite murderous difficulties during the production of the series, I'm glad to have worked on this project. In fact, I do have some nebulous plans for another — far more ambitious — **BGC** miniseries... If you're interested in seeing further adventures of the Knight Sabers, or wish to comment on **Grand Mal** (or even **The Dirty Pair**), write to me, in care of this letter column. Eventually I do see most of the mail, even if I never have the time to reply to it.

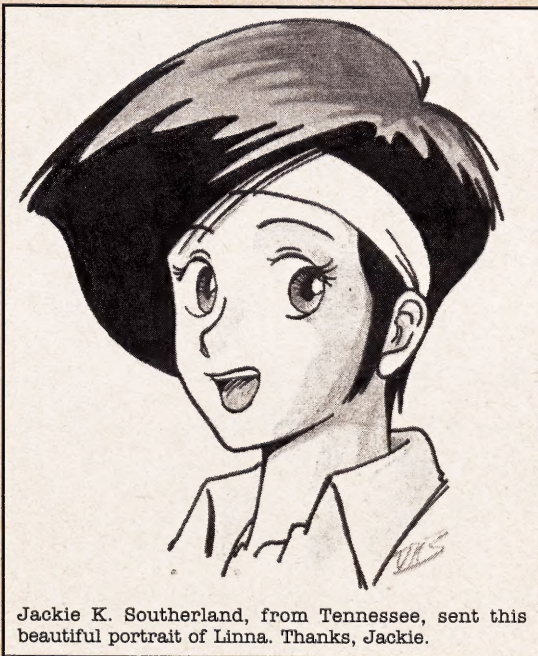
One final **BGC** note: My apologies to Tokio Kazuka for this issue's Linna "homage."

However, the project currently looming over me, akin to the sword of Damocles, features a different group of female protagonists... **The Dirty Pair: Fatal but Not Serious** will be a four- or five-issue color miniseries, tentatively scheduled for release in the spring of '95. **Fatal's** "Yuri-centric" story features Hong Kong-style mayhem, crass exploitation, apocalyptic planetary destruction, and the usual thinly veiled "homages" to Masamune and Sonoda, while dwelling on themes best described as "Cobainesque, yet funny."

As usual, I'll be writing, pencilling, and (alas), inking this latest **DP** saga. I'm already stockpiling 200mg No-Doz® and assorted microbrews to help me cope with the coming ordeal... Anyway, assuming that I don't keel over and die in the meantime, I'll see ya in '95! **Bye!**

A last-minute note from your editor, here. Adam Warren's **The Dirty Pair: I Honestly Hate You** will be showcased in Dark Horse's **San Diego Comic-Con Comic #3**, available free in your goodies bag when (if!) you can make it to next month's San Diego Comic Convention. See ya!

— Edward Martin III



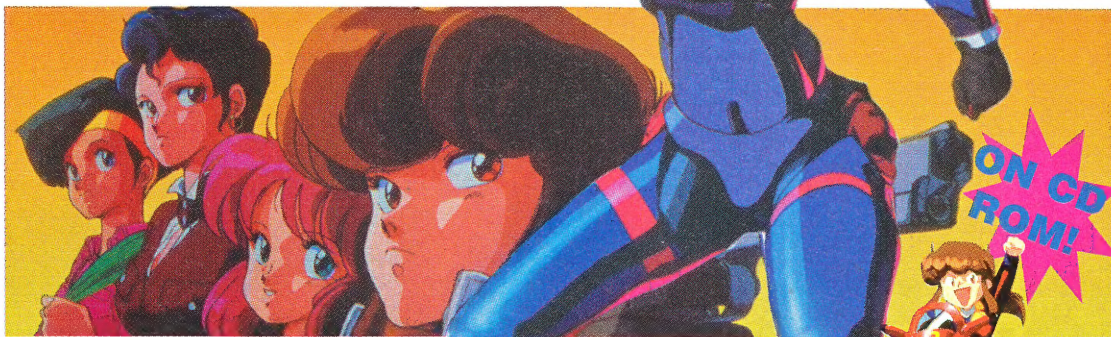
Jackie K. Southerland, from Tennessee, sent this beautiful portrait of Linna. Thanks, Jackie.

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